

DOCTRINE

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**MARCH
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SAINT PATRICK

LUDWIG BIELER

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IRISH HOLINESS

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DOCTRINE AND LIFE

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ST. PATRICK'S MISSION. His acceptance of his mission to Ireland a triumph of divine grace. The whispering campaign against him; his magnificent vindication of his work and of God's work through him. His prayer for the Irish. **Father Aegidius Doolan, O.P.**, a distinguished theologian, widely known as a lecturer and writer, is attached to St. Saviour's Priory, Dublin.

THE ROAD OF THE SAINTS. The Irish saints: their sense of the transience, and yet goodness, of this world; deep Eucharistic devotion; lively sense of the Communion of Saints; Christo-centric piety. **Dr. Daphne D. C. Pochin Mould** is a well-known authority on Irish traditions of spirituality.

CHANGING IRISH SPIRITUALITY. The extraversion of Irish spirituality; a change begun by Abbot Columba Marmion will gradually become more pronounced in Ireland, its agents being the modern missionary movement, the lay-apostolate, devotion to Our Lady and communal fidelity in worship. **Father Michael O'Carroll, C.S.Sp.**, is on the staff of Blackrock College, Dublin. He is author of *Mediatress of Graces*.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS. The theologian, who devoted his whole life to study. The saint, with his devotion to the Eucharist and his obedience. How the two aspects combined. **Father Jérôme Hamer, O.P.**, a well-known theologian, is Regent of Studies in the Dominican House of Studies at Le Saulchoir, France.

ST. PATRICK and ST. BRIGID. These are the second and third of a series of drawings, specially commissioned for *Doctrine and Life* from leading Irish artists. **Mr. Oisín Kelly** is our leading sculptor and won the coveted Gold Medal for sculpture at the Salzburg *Biennale* of 1956. **Father Jack Hanlon** is a distinguished painter, a priest of the archdiocese of Dublin.

DOCTRINE AND LIFE attempts to apply the teaching of Christ to the lives of Christians. It is edited and published by the Irish Dominicans; © Dominican Publications. Annual post-paid subscription (payable to the Manager, Dominican Publications, St. Saviour's, Dublin 1, Ireland) £1; \$3.00 U.S.A.; 25/- Australia.

CUM PERMISSU SUPERIORUM ORD. NIHIL OBSTAT: W. BARDEN, O.P., S.T.M., CENSOR DEPUTATUS. PERMISSU ORDINARIJ DIOEC. DUBLINENSIS. 21 jan. 1961

EDITORIAL

THE fifteenth centenary of St. Patrick's death invites us to look back to the apostle who looms so powerfully out of the mists of Irish antiquity, as he looms out of Mr. Oisin Kelly's superb drawing (see art inset page iii). He is there represented as a figure of massive strength, a strength which is not his own, but is borrowed from the Blessed Trinity. It is thus we see him, too, in the articles by Dr. Ludwig Bieler and Father Aegidius Doolan. They show us a man constantly and deeply aware of God, generously responsive to the movements of the Spirit within him, a man who thought himself "a sinner, the most unlearned, the least of all the faithful" and who was acutely and gratefully conscious that it was God's grace which had accomplished through him the task that God had assigned him. When he spoke of his achievements, it was, in Dr. Bieler's phrase, with "a humble and almost wondering *Deo Gratias*".

Our gaze is arrested by these essential characteristics of St. Patrick, and they are surely relevant to our time. Ireland has crossed the threshold of an industrial revolution and we face an era of consequent increase of the power of money and of the machine. Many of the bulwarks on which we had come to rely—perhaps overmuch—for the protection of our Christian heritage are being eroded with increasing rapidity by the waves of radio and television, as well as by the cinema and the printed word. Many of our people forsake altogether even such shelter as Ireland still affords. It is likely that we will have to learn to place less and less reliance on the human taboos and pressures of our society. More and more will individuals be forced to rely on their own faith, on the Church, on the "mighty strength" of the Trinity.

The centenary is a recall to fundamentals: to the old Irish saints' total dedication to God, as it is described in Doctor Pochin Mould's article, to the ruggedness of the faith of St. Brigid and of our Irish mothers, as it is so powerfully suggested in Father Hanlon's drawing. Father O'Carroll points out that things are happening in this century in Ireland whose effects on our spiritual life we have not yet been able to assess. They are principally the missionary effort and the lay apostolate. Affect the spiritual life of the country they must, and powerfully. Perhaps they are being used by God's Providence to prepare us for the testing times that must lie ahead.

ST. PATRICK'S MISSION

AEGIDIUS DOOLAN, O.P.

The Barbarous Irish

THERE are simple people who cannot imagine a time when Ireland was anything but "God's own country" and the Irish people God's own people. They resent the way in which Ireland is spoken of in the Divine Office on St. Patrick's feast as having been, before his coming, the abode of devils—*daemonum sedes*—while the Irish are described as *ferox*, "a wild people". Obviously, such folk detract a great deal from St. Patrick's achievement, which was primarily the conversion of the Irish from paganism to Christianity. St. Patrick himself speaks of the Irish when he came amongst them as a barbarous people, "who never had the knowledge of God but worshipped idols and unclean things". His word for unclean things, *immunda*, suggests unnamed viciousness. Dom Louis Gougaud says of the pagan Celt: "His manners and morals are violent and barbarous; his nobles are under the sway of gross appetites. . . . Everywhere we meet with beliefs marked by a crude naturalism, and utterly devoid of moral character, with minds held captive and enslaved under the tyrannic rule of sorcery. . . . Gluttony, theft, quarreling, debauchery are commonplace".¹

An Unwelcome Vocation

St. Patrick is certainly quite explicit that after his experience of Ireland and the Irish during his years in captivity he could never imagine himself going back except with the utmost reluctance. Ireland was for him, not only literally, but also figuratively, the last place on God's earth. He did indeed go back, as we know, but only at God's call and "bound in the might of God's grace". His account of what led to his return to Ireland is one of the greatest passages in all literature. Even in translation it pierces to the heart:

After a few years I was again in Britain with my family, who received me as a son and adjured me that from now, after all

1. Dom Louis Gougaud, *Christianity in Celtic Lands*, pp. 8-11.

the tribulations I had been through, I would never go away from them again.

But in that very place "I saw in a vision of the night" a man coming as it seemed from Ireland whose name was Victoricus. He had any number of letters and one of these he gave to me. I read its opening words and it was "the voice of the Irish". And as I read I thought that at that very moment I heard the voice of those who lived beside the wood of Voclut, which is near the Western Sea. And they cried out as with one voice: "We beseech thee (holy) youth, to come and walk once more amongst us". I was stricken to the heart and I could read no more (*Conf.* 23).

The thought of going back to Ireland was for Patrick heart-breaking and shattering. The hardest decision of his life was to follow his vocation to be the apostle of Ireland. He pictures himself as almost exhausted, when the time came, by the struggle between nature and grace: "I did not go to Ireland of my own accord, not until I had nearly perished" (*Conf.* 28). But grace triumphed at last: "Whence came to me that gift, great and salutary beyond measure, so to realise what God is, and so to love him, that I would leave my fatherland and my family?" (*Conf.* 36). They begged him not to leave them, even piling gifts upon him as if to bribe him not to go. But, by the grace of God, he resisted every enticement and allurements. His friends took it badly: "I displeased them", he writes. But God was pleased: "God guiding me, I did in no wise consent or yield to them. It was not my grace but God who conquered in me, and he resisted them all so that I came to the (heathen) Irish to preach the Gospel and to endure insults from unbelievers, "hearing the reproach of my going abroad" and suffering many persecutions even unto bonds (*Conf.* 37).

St. Patrick was emphatic, repeating it again and again, that it was not any natural love or attraction, much less self-interest, that brought him back to Ireland. It was, simply, his love for God. "Here I am in Ireland", he wrote in a famous letter, "a bishop by the grace of God, in the midst of a barbaric people, a stranger in the midst of strangers, for the love of God. God himself is my witness that it is so" (*Letter to Coroticus*, 1). His one object was—in the words of St. Prosper, commending the zeal of Pope St. Celestine, in whose pontificate Patrick became bishop—"to make the pagan island Christian". The ancient Irish chronicler, Muirchu, says the same in other words: Patrick came "to preach and impart the grace of

God to the Irish". His whole life and work were "unto the praise of the glory of grace" (*Eph.* 1).

Like all holy men, he "offered violence to his nature" (*Imitation* 3:48). He tells us how once, when already established in Ireland, he was sorely tempted to give up his "laborious episcopate" and go back to his native land and kindred. "God knows", he exclaims, "that I desired it greatly". But grace prevailed against nature: "I am bound in the Spirit, who makes it clear to me that I should do this. He would hold me guilty, and I am afraid of losing the labour which I have begun—yet, indeed, not I, but Christ the Lord who commanded me that I should come and be with them for the rest of my life" (*Conf.* 43). He says the same still more emphatically in his letter to Coroticus, protesting that he did not come to Ireland "without God, or according to the flesh. Who then compelled me? I was bound by the Spirit not to see any of my own people. In Christ, I am the servant of a foreign nation, because of the unspeakable glory of the life everlasting which is in Christ Jesus Our Lord", (*Letter to Coroticus*, 10).

Wagging Tongues

St. Patrick was no exception to the general rule that those who witness to the grace of God, and those especially who are its ministers, will suffer persecution. Like so many other great bishops before and since, he had his critics and calumniators. Not to speak of the physical assaults upon him, all sorts of rumours and insinuations began to circulate about what had brought him back to Ireland. His very credentials as a bishop, on the validity of which his mission depended, were called in question. It was said of him that even if he were not an imposter, he was certainly an upstart. There were wagging tongues spreading the news—for they had it, they said, on excellent authority—that when first there was question of Patrick's being made a bishop and sent to Ireland, his superiors at Auxerre investigated his past life, only to find that it did not bear investigation. There was some mention of a hidden sin! How then did it come about that he was now a bishop? And even if his credentials were acceptable, what a poor figure he cut compared with such great contemporary bishops as Augustine of Hippo or Cyril of Alexandria! Why, his very Latin was crude, and betrayed his want of culture.

This last charge did not hurt. Patrick confessed (and his whole *Confession* was in answer to the charges made against him) that he had received little training in language. He had become more accustomed to Irish than to Latin. But one further charge cut deep. Did it not seem, his critics urged, that it was not his love for God, but his love of money had brought him back to Ireland? And finally, even if he were not making money, he was making a name for himself—as a man of great holiness and wisdom—which was completely undeserved.

One recalls the words of the *Book of Wisdom* about those who "lie in wait for the just man . . . whose life is not like other men's. . . . These things they thought and were deceived, for their own malice blinded them" (*Wisdom* 2:12, 15, 21). But Patrick's charity protests: "It was not malice, it was just that they despised me. . . ." (*Conf.* 46).

Patrick's Reply: the Confession

If nothing were at stake but Patrick's own reputation, he would presumably have let the charges of his accusers pass in silence. According to teaching handed down by the Fathers of the Church: "Patiently to suffer personal injuries is praiseworthy, but to overlook injuries done God is the height of impiety."² St. Gregory the Great shows how that principle applies in the case of St. Patrick: "Those who are so placed that their lives should be an example to others ought, if possible, to silence their detractors, lest their preaching should be rendered ineffective".³ It was on this principle that St. Patrick's great model, St. Paul, had defended his good name and justified his apostolate in his second epistle to the Corinthians. This epistle may be said to have been the inspiration of the *Confession* of St. Patrick. Like it, and like Newman's *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, it was called into being by the false charges of opponents.

The *Confession* of St. Patrick is one of the most moving and inspiring writings ever penned, though amazingly little known even to Catholic scholars.⁴ St. Patrick introduces himself as "Patrick the sinner, the most uncultivated and the least of all the faithful and

2. St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Matt.* 5, quoted by St. Thomas in *S. Theol.*, II-II, 108, 1.

3. St. Gregory the Great, *Super Ezech.*, *Hom.* 9.

4. When the present writer lectured on it in Rome, in an international university, he was surprised to find how many had never heard of it.

held in the utmost contempt by many". One may well say that it was St. Patrick's humility which impelled him "to confess the grace of God" towards him and to make that the very theme of his *Confession*: "I was a stone lying in a deep mire and he that is mighty came and in his mercy lifted me up . . . and placed me on the top of the wall. Therefore I was under an obligation to cry aloud mightily, so that I may make some return to the Lord for his great benefits . . . so great that the mind cannot measure them. . . . It lies on me as a duty to make known the gift of God" (*Conf.* 12, 14).

St. Patrick had no fault in disposing of the charges and criticisms of his maligners. The sin out of which they made such capital had been committed when he was hardly more than a child. ("I cannot say, God knoweth, if I was fifteen years of age" (*Conf.* 27).) There was no question of public scandal, but he had himself, too trustingly, made it known to one of whom he speaks as his "dearest friend, to whom I confided my very soul" (*Conf.* 32). It was this trusted friend who, thirty years later, when the question arose of consecrating Patrick bishop, betrayed his confidence and put him publicly to shame. The treachery cut Patrick to the heart. Even his superiors were for the moment taken aback, and Patrick's appointment as head of the mission to Ireland was temporarily deferred. But experienced and holy men were not going to let a sin committed in boyhood, and long since repented of, stand for long in the way of Patrick's promotion to the episcopate for which he was so admirably equipped. He was known by all to be a man of prayer, a man who had done more than enough penance for the sins of his youth, a man of wholly apostolic heart. Those who knew him knew that he had no ambition personally for ecclesiastical preferment and that to be sent to Ireland was the last thing that he would have wished for, left to himself. But they knew, too, that "the voice of the Irish"—pleading with him to come back, and, in pity for their ignorance and sinfulness, to preach to them and impart to them the grace of Jesus Christ—was for him the voice of God. None knew better than he that the Irish were not yet God's people, that their country was the seat of devils,^f and that it was to be his mission to overthrow the devil and destroy his works and pomps—to drive that "old serpent" out of Ireland—and to make the sons and daughters of Ireland the sons and daughters of the living God.

Vehemently, therefore, Patrick took up the charges that he had contrived to be sent to Ireland in order to make money or to make a name for himself, or for any other unworthy motive:

5. Cf. *Conf.*, 34-37; 38-41; 48; 50-51; *Ep.* 1.

If, when I baptized so many thousands of men, I expected as much as half a screpall⁶ from any one . . . tell me of it and I will restore it to you. Or when the Lord everywhere ordained clerics by means of my humble person, and I gave them my ministrations gratis, if I demanded from them even the price of my shoes, tell it against me and I will restore you more. . . . I testify (in joy of heart) before God and his holy angels, that I never had any motive but the Gospel and the promises of Christ for returning to that nation from which on a former occasion I had with difficulty escaped (*Conf.* 50, 61).

The ancient testimony was exact: the one motive of Patrick's coming was "to preach and impart the grace of God to the Irish". He fulfilled Pope St. Celestine's ambition: "to make the pagan island Christian", that is, an island of saints.

All About the Grace of Christ

St. Patrick was very conscious that any vindication of his mission would be simply a vindication of the grace of God, without which there could be neither salvation nor any salutary act. "By grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God, not of works, that no man may glory" (*Eph.* 2:8-9). That teaching of St. Paul was always uppermost in St. Patrick's mind: "Let no one ever say that it was I in my ignorance who did whatever little I have done or taught, according to God's good pleasure, but let it be most rightly believed that it was the gift of God" (*Conf.* 62). He had mastered St. Paul's teaching—of which St. Thomas says: "It is all about the grace of Christ"—as it had been so magnificently expounded, in St. Patrick's own time, by St. Augustine against Pelagianism, and formulated authoritatively by Pope St. Celestine, at the close of whose pontificate St. Patrick was sent to Ireland.

A Christian in the full sense, St. Patrick knew, is another Christ, the living temple of the Blessed Trinity, possessed by the Holy Spirit and moved to do everything done in word or in work by the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Patrick, like St. Paul, would see Christ in every Christian: "Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me. Christ with me. Christ within me". How perfectly

6. The *screpall* was a small silver coin. See Ludwig Bieler's note in *Ancient Christian Writers*, volume 17, p. 89, note 110.

that ideal was realised in Patrick is beautifully expressed in Dr. Grattan Flood's paraphrase of an ancient hymn in honour of St. Patrick.

Within

That Spirit-shadowed heart was Christ conceived
Hourly through faith, hourly through love Christ was born . . .
Who heard him heard with his a lordlier voice. . . .

Christ could indeed say of his apostle: "Who heareth you, heareth me".

St. Patrick's highest claim was to be the ambassador of Christ, a dispenser of the mysteries of grace. In a passage of truly pontifical dignity, he presents the credentials of his mission:

"Behold I send many fishers and hunters' (*Jer.* 16:16), saith the Lord. . . . And so it was our bounden duty to spread our nets so that a teeming multitude and a throng should be taken for God and that everywhere there should be clerics to baptize and preach to a needy and thirsting people as the Lord says in the Gospel. . . . "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (*Matt.* 28:19 ff.) (*Conf.* 40).

The amazing, one might say miraculous, success of his mission he attributed solely to the grace of God: "I am exceedingly a debtor to God who bestowed so great a grace on me that many people should be by me regenerated to God. . . . They in Ireland who never had the knowledge of God and worshipped only idols and unclean things, they have now become the people of the Lord. They are rightly called sons of God" (*Conf.* 41). Not the least of God's gifts to Patrick was that he lived to see the fulfilment of his young heart's dream, that—in the words which he himself quotes from Osee the prophet, it should "come to pass in the place where it was said, you are not my people, there shall they be called the sons of the living God" (*Osee* 1:10). One may say with Thurston-Butler: "It is unquestionably true that in an apostolate of less than thirty years, Patrick had converted Ireland as a whole to Christianity".

St. Patrick's Prayer

The success of St. Patrick's mission is to be attributed to divine grace, but in a special way to St. Patrick's prayer, made in the Spirit of grace. "I saw him", he writes, "praying in me" (*Conf.* 25). It is a consolation to all the children of St. Patrick to know that one of the prayers he made was this: "May it never happen to me from my God that I should lose this people whom he purchased at the ends of the earth" (*Conf.* 58). That prayer has been wonderfully answered up to now. Its further fulfilment depends, under God, on whether his sons and daughters still continue in St. Patrick's word and work. "Would that you may accomplish still greater things and do still mightier works than I: this will be my glory" (*Conf.* 47). And it will be all "the gift of God". On that last word St. Patrick ends his *Confession*: "Let no one ever say that it was I who did whatever little I have done . . . but think you and let it be most rightly believed that it was the gift of God. And this is my confession before I die".

Lectures on the Passion

The Dublin Institute of Catholic Sociology, 62-63 Eccles St., Dublin, has organised a series of lectures on the Passion, at Dominican Hall, Eccles St., Dublin. They will take place at 8 p.m. from 24 to 29 March, inclusive. The following are the titles of the lectures and the names of the lecturers, in the order which the lectures will follow: *The Passion and the Christian Life*, by Father Noel-Dermot O'Donoghue, O.D.C.; *The Passion in Church Art*, by Father Cyril Barrett, S.J.; *The Music of Holy Week and Easter*, by Mr. Oliver O'Brien and the Palestrina Choir; *The Scenes of the Passion Today*, by Father John McMahon; *The Story of the Passion* (two lectures), by Monsignor Alfred O'Rahilly.

GLIMPSES OF ST. PATRICK'S SPIRITUAL LIFE

LUDWIG BIELER

THE CONFESSION

THE writings of St. Patrick—the only authentic evidence of the saint's life—have been so thoroughly scrutinised as a biographical and historical source that we are almost in danger of forgetting that the major text, St. Patrick's *Confession*,¹ was written first and foremost as a spiritual document. Any biographical or historical matter in it is incidental; Patrick, who takes it for granted that these things are known to his readers, does not bother to be explicit about them, and at times—for understandable reasons—seems to be even deliberately vague. To the modern historian this lack of precision is exasperating; in earlier times Patrick's intention was perhaps better understood or, to say the least, more fully appreciated. The first "biographer" of St. Patrick, the author of that primitive *Vita* which for us is reflected only in Muirchú and in the Colgan *Lives* (Trias Thaumaturga, 1647, pp. 11-61), has a consistently different attitude to those sections of the Confession in which Patrick relates "external" incidents and to those in which he describes spiritual experiences. The latter he quotes in the saint's own words, the former he transposes into ordinary narrative.

To maintain that the Confession is primarily a spiritual document does not mean that it belongs in the same category as the *Histoire d'une âme* or even the Confessions of St. Augustine, which St. Patrick's Confession resembles remotely in certain aspects. Yet, it is true to say that Patrick also tells the history of a soul. In fact, whatever historical matter the Confession contains is there merely because of its bearing on the spiritual theme. This theme, however, is not the "story of his soul" purely and simply, it is something more definite and more particular: Patrick bears witness to his divine vocation, that is, to his apostolate among the Irish; he does so before God and men, with an eye on some ecclesiastical quarters where persons in high places had criticised his character and his conduct. To meet this criticism, however, Patrick makes use of one single means: his argument, the sole argument that cannot possibly be defeated, is the fact of his vocation, which, as he never tires of repeating, was thrust upon him, undeservedly and against his

1. St. Patrick's *Confession* is quoted from my translation in *Ancient Christian Writers*, volume 17, Newman Press (Westminster, Md) and Longmans, Green and Co. (London), 1953, by kind permission of the editors and publishers.

wishes. "I, Patrick, a sinner . . ." are the words with which he introduces himself and throughout this document his mission to Ireland is represented as the work of divine grace and as a "bondage of the spirit". However, in order to raise this testimony above the level of human assertion and presumption, Patrick finds it necessary to reveal certain intimacies of his spiritual life. He does so with evident reluctance, not to say embarrassment, as far as his own person is concerned; he assures us that he would never have done so had he not, in his circumstances, considered it a spiritual duty (a debt, to use his own word) to acknowledge God's ways as manifested in his life and work.

This specifically spiritual character sets Patrick's Confession apart from his Letter to the Soldiers of Coroticus. In spite of the great similarity in tone and sentiment and even in the actual wording, the two pieces are of an entirely different nature. Even the apologetic element in the Letter (subsidiary to its main purpose, to effect the excommunication of Coroticus) includes a mere reference to his vocation, which here is taken for granted. Characteristically, the Letter does not relate a single incident of Patrick's life that is of a spiritual nature.

It is not my intention to comment on the spirituality of St. Patrick's Confession as such. This has been done most competently by Rev. N. Kinsella.² My ambition is limited: I shall endeavour to recount and to analyse those passages in which the author tells us of a particular experience which to him had some spiritual significance. I aim at nothing more than to make it as clear as possible what, in my opinion, St. Patrick says he experienced. It is certainly not for me to pronounce on the spiritual, let alone supernatural character (or otherwise) of anything that Patrick relates. One thing only is above the realm of doubt and interpretation: for Patrick these experiences were of the spiritual order, and who are we not to take his word for what it is?

AWARENESS OF GOD

The first glimpse of Patrick's spiritual life that we get is in the description of his life of prayer as a slave in Ireland (*Confession*, c. 16). Torn away most unexpectedly from the life of the Romanised upper class of Britain when, at the age of sixteen, he was captured by Irish pirates and sold into servitude, tending flocks on a wooded

2. *The Spirituality of St. Patrick's Confession*; *Ir. Eccl. Rec.*, 5 ser., XCI, 1959, pp. 161-173.

mountain he turned to God. Reconsidering his past life, which was probably neither better nor worse than that of any young member of his society (or, for that matter, of any similar society throughout the ages), he began to see it in the light of Christian perfection and condemned it; his present life he would regard as a punishment for his sins (cf. *Conf.*, c. 1-2), but also as a "purgation" and as a means by which he was drawn closer to God. The love and fear of God, Patrick says, came to him more and more (note the phrasing), his faith increased, and "his spirit was moved", so much so that every day he recited up to a hundred prayers and almost as many at night. From what Patrick tells us about his worldly boyhood it is unlikely that he had a great store of different prayers to fall back on; we may take it for certain that he repeated the same few prayers over and over again. It is in this way that an awareness of the living God would be aroused in his mind and soul. This intensity of prayer seems to have had even a physical effect: Patrick says that although he used to rise before dawn and to pray in the open, "in snow, frost and rain", he felt no harm (*malum*) and not even physical reluctance (*pigritudo*) because of the fire of the Spirit within him (*quia tunc spiritus in me feruebat*). I am inclined to see in the use of the word *feruebat* slightly more than a metaphor; every pilgrim to Lough Derg will know what I mean.

The "voice" which Patrick hears in his sleep (*Conf.*, c. 17), promising him the imminent return to his native country and telling him that a ship is ready to take him home, need not be more miraculous than voices which Patrick professes to have heard in his sleep on some other occasions. Here and elsewhere (c. 21, 29, 35) he qualifies this voice as a "message" (*responsum*). On the strength of this message he attempts an escape; fortified and guided by God he succeeds, and when first refused by the captain of the ship (*Conf.*, c. 18), his prayer—a prayer resigned in the will of God—is granted: he is allowed to go on board.

Patrick's journey with the crew (*Conf.*, c. 18-19) is dominated by a deep spiritual awareness on his part. In spite of his precarious status he refuses to perform a pagan rite of initiation; he hopes to win his pagan fellow travellers for the Catholic faith; when they are threatened with starvation in a desolate part of strange country, it is a challenge to "his" God and Patrick's confidence in him that prompts him to pray for them. The answer to this prayer—they come across a herd of straying pigs—is evidently no miracle, but it comes as the assurance of a prayer heard. Patrick's companions, however, far from becoming Christians, rather see something divine

in his person; they offer him wild honey, which Patrick, for this very reason, refuses.

THE SPIRIT CRIED OUT

At this point—which perhaps is not quite without significance—Patrick relates again a personal experience. During the night after they had their fill of pork Patrick felt attacked by Satan, who “fell over me like a huge rock so that I was unable to move a single limb”. What follows must be quoted in Patrick’s own words. “But whence came it into my mind, ignorant as I am, to call upon Helias? And meanwhile I saw the sun rise in the sky, and while I was shouting “Helias! Helias!” with all my might, suddenly the splendour of that sun fell on me and immediately freed me of all misery. And I believe that I was sustained by Christ my Lord, and that his Spirit was even then crying out in my behalf, and I hope it will be so on the day of my tribulation” (*Conf.*, c. 20). The material basis of Patrick’s nightmare is obvious. Less so, and a cause of surprise to himself, is his invocation of Helias. I have suggested elsewhere³ that the rising sun which put an end to Patrick’s agony evoked in his mind some faint echo of the verbal assonance *Helias—Helios* and possibly also a vague reminiscence of some pictorial representation of the prophet’s ascent to heaven in a fiery chariot. The point that concerns us here, however, is that for Patrick this was the first of a number of experiences which had this in common that the Spirit “cried out” on his behalf: it was not Patrick who called upon Helias—to invoke the prophet was not his habit; he wondered at himself what could have made him do so; and his only explanation was that he had been prompted by Another One within him.

THE VOICE OF THE IRISH

Back at home, Patrick is cordially welcomed by his people, who urge him to stay with them for good. But he cannot forget the Irish among whom he has lived for six years. Slowly, one might assume, he came to think that perhaps he was called to bring them the Christian faith which he himself had first realised as a living force during his Irish captivity. His conscious mind would naturally shrink from the task; but one night he had a dream which made him face the issue (*Conf.*, c. 23).

A man named Victoricus (we cannot identify him with any degree

3. *Libri Epistolarum s. Patricii*, 1952, II, 144, ff.

of certainty) comes to him "as it were from Ireland" with innumerable letters; he gives Patrick one of these to read; and as he begins to read the "Voice of the Irish" aloud to himself (as was the ancient custom), he thinks he hears their voices—those of the people of the Wood of Voclut—calling him back. He is "hit in his heart" and unable to read any further; at this moment he wakes up. This is clearly a dream, with the characteristic vagueness and the shifting situations of dreaming. Patrick's introductory words *uidi in uisu noctis* (borrowed from *Daniel* 7:13) need not imply that he regarded it as a vision in the more specific meaning of the term, and his subsequent experiences (*Conf.*, c. 24-25), which gave him an increasing assurance of God's call,⁴ would seem to imply that with regard to this dream Patrick adopted a prudently cautious attitude. It is only in retrospect that he comments on it with the words: "Thanks be to God, after many years the Lord gave them according to their cry". Looking back, Patrick traces the awareness of his vocation to that dream, a dream sent by God in order to arouse him for his great task.

Some other night (*Conf.*, c. 24) Patrick again heard people's voices, clearly and unmistakably, although he did not understand what they were saying. (The wording is not quite explicit, but evidently Patrick refers to the same people whom he had heard calling him before.) This time he was unable to place them. "I know not, God knoweth", he says with the apostle, "were they within me or beside me". At the end, however, a voice said: "He that has given his life for thee, it is he that speaks in thee", and again he woke up. This voice "at the end of the prayer" is clearly distinguished from the voices Patrick had heard before: Christ himself assures Patrick that those other voices—and thus the cry from the Wood of Voclut, the "Voice of the Irish"—represent a divine call.

A third experience (*Conf.*, c. 25) removes the last shadow of doubt. "And again I saw him praying in me, and it was as it were within my body, and I heard him above me, that is over the inward man, and there he prayed with groanings. And all the time I was astonished, and wondered, and thought with myself who it could be that prayed in me. But at the end of the prayer he spoke, saying that he was the Spirit; and so I woke up, and remembered the apostle saying: the Spirit helpeth the infirmities of our prayer, etc." Here to all appearances Patrick describes a mystical state, and he finds objective confirmation in the authority of St. Paul.

4. See Father Kinsell's lucid exposition, *l.c.*, p. 164 f.

A BONDAGE TO THE END

Patrick can doubt his vocation no longer, but he is still far from seeing it realised. He has to pass through a dark time of trials, involving humiliation and the betrayal of a trust by his closest friend. At the moment when all seems lost, however, God assures him once more of his call. This last experience of its kind which Patrick relates (*Conf.*, c. 29) links up with the three that have gone before; it is really for the sake of this final certainty in an hour of great tribulation that Patrick refers—in words that are tantalisingly obscure—to an episode in his life of which otherwise we would know absolutely nothing. In the night after his rejection as a missionary bishop Patrick sees “a writing without honour against his face”—perhaps a medallion with his head, and his name written against it, but without the title of bishop which by then he ought to have had. While he looks at this he hears a “divine utterance” (*responsum diuinum*) expressing displeasure at this privation of due honour.⁵

Patrick does not indicate how he was rehabilitated; the bridge between the story of his rejection and the account of his missionary work in Ireland is an ecstatic song of praise. The remainder of the Confession contains no descriptions of mystical experiences. There is just one possible indication that they had not quite ceased. As a man, Patrick never felt at home in Ireland. He was a Roman at heart, his human roots were in Britain, his spiritual home was Gaul. He often desired to see again his relatives and his former co-religious in the flesh; yet he could not possibly indulge in that desire. He knew he was “bound by the Spirit”, who would “give evidence against him if he did, and tell him that he was going to make himself guilty” (*Conf.*, c. 43). This sounds as if that mysterious voice inside him still made itself heard whenever his vocation was concerned, overruling his natural wishes, however understandable and, humanly speaking, legitimate they might be. It was really a “bondage to the end”, as the poet in the Tripartite Life makes Patrick say. But to this bondage Patrick submitted unquestioningly, its burden was accepted by him as a divine grace, and his only reaction is a humble and almost wondering *Deo gratias*.



5. See note at the end of this article.

NOTE ON *CONFESSION*, C. 29

Contrary to my previous comments on this chapter (*The Life and Legend of St. Patrick*, p. 66, 69 f.; *The Works of St. Patrick*, p. 86), I am now inclined to understand the words of the divine voice, *Male uidimus faciem designati nudato nomine*, as meaning "We have seen with displeasure the face of him who has been referred to by his naked name", i.e. as a divine disapproval of the very sight that Patrick saw. According to this interpretation the phrases *scriptum erat contra faciem meam sine honore* and *faciem designati nudato nomine* would refer to the same thing, and the *Male uidimus* of the voice, on which Patrick dwells with such great emphasis (*nec sic praedixit: Male uidisti, sed: Male uidimus, quasi si ibi se iunxisset*), gains a special significance if it takes up Patrick's *uidi in uisu noctis*.

Eighth Liturgical Congress

Our last issue carried a preliminary notice of the liturgical congress to be held at St. Columba's Abbey, Glenstal, Murroe, Co. Limerick, on 11 and 12 April next. We have since received a more detailed programme from the Congress Secretary, but we are short of space in this issue and we can merely note the following: the theme of the congress is **Participating in the Mass** and it will be discussed under that heading by Father A. M. Roguet, O.P., and under the following headings (names of lecturers after titles): *Participating in Music at Mass* (Father Kieran O'Gorman), *Participating in Offering the Mass* (Dom Placid Murray, O.S.B.), *The Mass in the Parish* (Most Rev. William Conway, Titular Bishop of Neve), *Participating in the Mass at School* (Fathers Michael Tynan and Charles Agnew), *The New Code of Rubrics* (Father Patrick J. Muldoon). For further information, and booking, apply to the Congress Secretary at Glenstal. Hotel booking to be arranged privately.

THE ROAD OF THE SAINTS

DAPHNE D. C. POCHIN MOULD

An Exile for Christ

IT is the shop windows in Milan that impress. True, you may see poverty around the corner, but the stranger from Ireland, with the roar of a great city's traffic in his ears, will be looking at the luxury goods on display and wondering if the crystallised fruit can be real. Milan has its contrasts. It is only a step from the great square in which the cathedral stands, from the arcades and the expensive restaurants, into a quiet back street and the Ambrosian Library. An attendant put a slim manuscript down on the table in front of me. Its clear script was still easy to read:

Corpus Domini accepimus, et sanguine eius potati sumus, ab omni malo non timebimus, quia Dominus nobiscum est.

(We have received the Body of the Lord and drunk his Blood, we shall not fear any evil for the Lord is with us.)

It was not the roar of the Milan traffic that the scribe had heard when he copied the antiphons for singing during the giving of Communion, of which the above is one, but the roar of the sea on the sands at Bangor on Belfast Lough. It was a long time ago too that this unknown Irish monk had compiled this book of canticles, hymns, prayers and antiphons for the Divine Office, sometime between the years 680 and 691. For me, to page through the Antiphonary of Bangor was not only to see the original manuscript of this unique witness to the spirit and liturgy of the Church in early Ireland, but to handle something immediately connected with that Church's great missionary work over Europe. For some Irish "exile for the love of Christ" had carried the Antiphonary into Europe and it had come at last to the library of Bobbio, St. Columban's foundation in the Apennines in northern Italy. If the text expressed the spirit of the Irish saints, its whereabouts expressed their achievement. St. Columban, probably our greatest Irish

1. The title is a well-known place-name in Ireland. There are "Roads of the Saints" up Mount Brandon from either side, by which the pilgrimage ascends. *Cosán na Naomh* (The Road of the Saints) is actually the Irish place-name on Brandon. The local parish priest, the Right Reverend Dean Reidy, insists it means "Saints" in St. Paul's sense, of the whole Christian community.

missionary to date, had been trained at St. Comgall's monastery of Bangor, left for Europe sometime during the second half of the sixth century, and after an adventurous but highly successful apostolate in what is now France, had crossed the Alps in 613 and come to Milan. From there he had founded Bobbio, "The Monte Cassino of the North", where he died in the November of 615. I had prayed at his tomb a couple of days before I came to look at the manuscripts from Bobbio library in the Ambrosian.

No Lasting City

Not only St. Ambrose had preached in Milan but our Columban. Very likely, his surviving sermons belong to that occasion. They are still apt comment on our desire of the goods in the shop windows:

What are you, mortal life? . . . You are the road to life, not life itself. In truth, you are a road, but not a plain one, for some of us long, for some short, for others broad, or narrow, sad or joyful; for all passing quickly, not to be recalled. Yes, you are a road, but that's not obvious to everybody, they see you but how few realise you are a way. . . . Let us not seek on the road what will be in our homeland; on the journey work and exhaustion, in the homeland, rest and security.

Columban's point is that our human existence is a pilgrimage, a journey, through a world of constantly-changing created things, to the glory, happiness, stability, of our real life which will be in heaven. To fix our hearts on the things of this world is to be like a traveller who sets out on a journey and forgets where he is going. Our whole life is like a single day's travelling, our home is in heaven where our Father dwells.

Yet the Irish saints, including Columban, did not therefore turn their backs on the world, crying "Vanity of vanities". They seem to have achieved an extraordinarily integrated view of life. God, the angels and the saints, the whole spiritual world was as real, even more real, than the material one but that too was the handiwork of the Lord, reflecting something of his goodness, power and beauty. Columban knew and loved the pagan classical writers, Irish monks did much to preserve their texts for the future. It was the Church, with Colmcille as its chief spokesman, who defended the existence,

rights and privileges of purely secular learning, that of the bards, when these were attacked at the famous Convention of Drumceatt in 575. One has a vivid impression of the whole ancient civilisation and culture of Ireland being put at the service of Christ.

Emphases of Irish Spirituality

From documents like the Antiphonary of Bangor and Columban's surviving writings, it is possible to list the special emphases of early Irish spirituality. Some of them have remained in Ireland to this day, the deep devotion to the Mass and the Blessed Sacrament, the awareness of the spiritual world and the reality of the communion of saints, the penitential streak. The basic form of prayer was the liturgy, and there was a deep love of the psalms; private devotion added long litanies in Irish and the highly significant "lorica" hymns. It seems likely that the lorica or breastplate had origin in a pagan spell formula; in its Christian form, it was a prayer in which one put on, as it were, the whole armour of God against every contingency and evil. "Let us be Christ's, not our own", said Columban, "live in Christ, that Christ may live in you". The lorica, like the familiar St. Patrick's Breastplate, not only encircles one with the power and protection of God but asks too for the indwelling of Christ: "Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me".

Today, perhaps more than ever, we tend to departmentalise life; religion in one compartment, "real life" in another. But for the Irish saints there was no such unreal division, the whole of life, the whole man, was the Lord's. An Irish prayer attributed to St. Fursa (who died in France in 649 or 650), though our present text is much later than his period, well expresses this total dedication of the whole man, body and soul. In a modernised version:

Go raibh cuing dhlí Dé ar an ngualainn seo,
fiosrú an Spioraid Naoimh go dtí an ceann so,
comhartha Chríost san éadan so,
éisteacht an Spioraid Naoimh sna cluasa so,
boltanú an Spioraid Naoimh san tsróin seo,
ionann 's ag muintir Neimhe an fhéachaint sna súile seo,
ionann 's ag muintir Neimhe an comhrá sna beola so,
saothar Eaglais Dé sna lámha so,

leas Dé agus na comharsan sna cosa so.
 Áit do Dhia an croí seo,
 le Dia Athair uile an duine seo.²

(May the yoke of the Law of God be on this shoulder,
 the coming of the Holy Spirit on this head,
 the sign of Christ on this forehead,
 the hearing of the Holy Spirit in these ears,
 the smelling of the Holy Spirit in this nose,
 the vision that the People of Heaven have in these eyes,
 the speech of the People of Heaven in this mouth,
 the work of the Church of God in these hands,
 the good of God and of the neighbour in these feet.
 May God be dwelling in this heart
 and this man belong entirely to God the Father.)

Eucharistic Devotion

We are all familiar with the fact that the early Irish Church was very largely monastic, perhaps less aware that in an entirely rural and townless Ireland, the monastery was the natural, indeed the only viable, since self-supporting, unit. The monastery was not only a centre of prayer and study, it was also a springboard for action. The monk's vocation included that of preacher, teacher and apostle. The Irish were seized with a desire to bring all men to the knowledge and love of God. The whole of life was seen as a pilgrimage to heaven, it could be symbolised in the journey to some special shrine, but perhaps expressed more fully in the vocation of the missionary, the "exile for the love of Christ". At home and abroad they stressed the need for frequent Communion and Confession, and the need to have a spiritual director, a "soul friend". "Though great you think your firmness, be not under your own guidance", says the Rule of Comgall. To help confessors, they compiled little books listing sins and the appropriate penances, *Penitentials*; in so doing and in their teaching on penance, they helped develop and spread the practice of confession as we know it today, against the older system of public penance for serious sin. Their work in this field, too, helped develop the doctrine of indulgences. The *Penitentials*

2. I am deeply indebted to Father P. de Hindeberg, S.J., for drawing my attention to this prayer of Naomh Fursa and for providing the above version.

are an unexpected source of evidence for Irish devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, for some of them have a special section dealing with all possible mishaps to It and the appropriate penances for those responsible.

The Antiphonary of Bangor is one of the most vital sources for early Irish Eucharistic devotion. It includes the well-known hymn *Sancti venite*:

<i>Sancti venite,</i>	Come you who are holy,
<i>Christi Corpus sumite,</i>	Receive the Body of Christ,
<i>Sanctum bibentes,</i>	Drinking the holy
<i>Quo redempti, sanguinem.</i>	Blood by which you are redeemed.

So runs the first verse of this hymn, which was sung during the giving of Communion at Bangor, and whose use has now been revived in Ireland. It is claimed as the oldest surviving Eucharistic hymn of the West; it is certain that it was written by an Irishman in Ireland. But the Antiphonary also contains a set of antiphons for Communion, one of which has already been quoted. These too might be brought back into use or used for our private devotions. The series includes:

Hic est panis vivus, qui de coelo descendit. Alleluia. Qui manducat ex eo, vivet in aeternum. Alleluia.

(This is the living bread, which came from heaven. Alleluia. Who so eats of it, shall live for ever.)

Gustate et videte, Alleluia, quam suavis est Dominus. Alleluia.
(Taste and see, Alleluia, how sweet is the Lord, Alleluia.)

Perhaps these antiphons were in use in Bangor still earlier, in Columban's time, and he had them in mind in his moving sermon on God as Fountain of Life and the Bread that came down from heaven. "Look", said Columban, "where that fountain flows from, for it and the Bread that comes from heaven have the same source. It is our God, the only Son, the Lord Christ, who is both Bread and Fountain, for whom we ought always to hunger".

Sense of the Communion of Saints

The legends of the Irish saints with their frequent mention of angelic interventions have this much truth in them; that the Irish

were acutely aware of the world of spiritual beings, angels and devils. So too they had a very live devotion to Our Lady and to the saints. One of the ancient documents, dating to around the year 800, from St. Maelruain's monastery of Tallaght is a Mass book (The Stowe Missal) and it is of interest that this shows that the Irish liturgy laid great stress on a commemoration of all the saints at every Mass, both in a list of names in the Canon and in a litany. From Tallaght, too, comes the famous Felire or Martyrology of Oengus, with a verse in praise of the particular saint or saints for each day of the year. Dr. John Hennig has described Oengus's work as "the greatest attempt ever made to present the subject matter of the Martyrology in a poetical form"; the point to stress is that Oengus did not mean his poem to be read a verse a day, but to be an invocation of all the saints of the Church recited right through every day. The story went that Oengus got the idea for his work by seeing angels over the grave of a certain ex-layman (late vocation to the monastic life). "What good did he do?" Oengus asked. "Indeed", a priest told him, "we never saw him do any good except that on lying down and rising up he recounted the saints of the world, as is the custom of ex-laymen".

But this devotion was not, as mostly with us now, limited to the great names in the calendar; it involved a sense of the active intercession of all the people, known and unknown in heaven. The old prayers and litanies are full of invocations like: "Three fifties of true monks under the yoke of Bishop Ibar", or "I beseech You by all the chosen of the law of the New Testament, around Your own holy apostles and around all the saints to the end of the world".

The Goodness of Creation

If then the Irish saints saw life as a journey, it was not a journey made alone or without help and protection from the "kingfolk" of heaven. And that a man like Columban felt the "tears of things", the sorrow of transitory beauty, the fleeting character of all we see and touch, did not mean he was insensible to natural beauty. That too was God's creation. This same Columban who described the deceptions and snares of mortal life so vividly, used to seek out hermitages on the hillside or in the woods in which to pray. Chagnoald, then Columban's attendant, later to be bishop of Laon, described how he himself had seen the saint call out the wild

birds and beasts, "they would" come at his call, and when he rubbed them down gently with his hand, they would frisk and gambol around him like puppies around their master. There was a squirrel, too, that he had often seen come down when called from the top branches of the trees, and alight on his hand or his shoulder as Columban was entering or leaving the cave".

The white pack horse of Iona that wept on the dying Colmcille's shoulder, or the white cat, Pangur, about whom his scholar master wrote a poem (the cat hunting mice, the Irishman hunting knowledge) are all part of this same outlook that always looked beyond the world to God, yet included the world because it was God's. The ancient Latin poem, *Altus Prosator*, of St. Colmcille expresses this integrated outlook. It is a theocentric picture of the whole world. It begins with the praise of the Trinity, goes on to describe the creation, the Fall, the natural world as sixth-century science saw it, concludes by looking forward to Christ's Second Coming and the Last Judgment. It is a vision of all existence in the context of eternity.

It would be wrong to look back to the outlook and spirituality of the early Irish saints as something past and done with, a piece of scholarship to study in libraries whilst life goes on outside. For it represents a living of the Christian ideal, it is an example for us today. If the Patrician Year and its celebrations are not to be merely pageantry, it should make us more aware of the outlook and wisdom of the past, of the Irish saints, not as something of long ago but as something relevant to our Christian living here and now. The Antiphony of Bangor includes a series of often very beautiful prayers for the different "Hours" of the Divine Office. One, for the dawn office, well sums up in a few words the Irish saints' total dedication to Christ. We too could make it our own:

Tu es spes et salus. Tu es vita et virtus. Tu es adjutor in tribulationibus. Tu es defensor animarum nostrarum, Deus Israel, in omnibus. Qui regnas, etc.

You (Christ) are our hope and salvation. You are our life and strength. You are our help in trouble. You are the defender of our souls in everything, God of Israel. Who reigns with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.

CHANGING IRISH SPIRITUALITY

MICHAEL O'CARROLL, C.S.Sp.

No Spiritual Classics

IT is a strange thing that Ireland for centuries made no outstanding contribution to spiritual literature. The Faith showed here at two different periods remarkable collective vigour and fervour—in the astonishing monastic growth of the first Christian centuries, and in the widespread acceptance of the Cistercian ideal which St. Malachy brought from Clairvaux. Yet out of all those active centres of asceticism and contemplation no striking personal document survives, nothing which, as a record of mystical progress or a treatise on states of prayer, would have a place in the world's library of the soul.

One is disconcerted by the fact in reading the history of spiritual literature. From the first centuries the European mind has had voices to express the yearnings and the pangs of the human spirit in its quest for God and to describe the stages by which he leads it to union and satisfaction. The struggle for holiness is an age-long business in the Church and from the first days the power of the word was realised in the arduous affair. Reading and writing have always been associated with the pursuit of Christian perfection; though it has sometimes been felt that the association has its dangers. Those who overcame the dangers, however, have given us works with the quality of permanence in them. This permanence derives from the power to invest truth with life.

The Irish tradition, at its greatest moments, was made up of robust simplicity, vigorous bodily penance, missionary zeal and a kind of unsophisticated candour. It seems a wild impertinence to say of the heroic saints of this island that they lacked subtlety and introspective power, that they shrank from prolonged analysis and description of spiritual states. Yet is it not evident from the record? Where is the equivalent, in the Irish Church, of those intricate analyses of the spirit which are commonplace in Spanish mystical literature? Where is the detailed study of the Christo-centric ideal, the phased identification with the mysteries and interior states of Christ that you find in the French schools of the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries? It might be too much to hope for an Irish



I ARISE TO-DAY
through a mighty strength;
the invocation of the Trinity;
through belief in the
Threeness;
through confession of the
Oneness
towards the Creator.

(from St. Patrick's *Breastplate*.)

The drawing on the opposite page is an illustration of this first stanza of the BREASTPLATE. It is by Mr. Oisín Kelly. The drawing of St. Brigid, on page one, is by Father Jack Hanlon. See comments by Mr. James White, art-critic of the Irish Times, and Father William Barden, O.P., professor of dogmatic theology at the Irish Dominican House of Studies.



Comment on Drawings

JACK WHITE

THE two drawings in this issue convey not only the vastly different personalities of the artists concerned but also their very different methods of conceiving a religious image. Mr. Oisín Kelly creates a surface of heavy shadow out of which we see emerging the figure of St. Patrick, dim and ghostlike. These shadows represent the fifteen hundred years of Christianity in between. The spirit of St. Patrick remains but the three bright ovals representing the Blessed Trinity, while reminiscent of the shamrock, are the coherent and practical basis of the saint's teaching and at the same time evidence of "the strength of his faith in the Three-in-one" as Father Barden says with such enviable lucidity. Mr. Kelly has used his pen to show the unvarying theology and the curious sense of timelessness if we are to understand St. Patrick at once as a figure of the Church alive in Ireland in the fifth century and a spiritual force still alive now. In these two distinct senses the artist has enlarged our vision and if he had been any more precise or descriptive in invoking the image of the saint he might only have reminded us of the rather grim bishop in green holding the shamrock which is the usual limited idea which the repositories turn out.

If Mr. Kelly's is the intellectual viewpoint, Father Hanlon's is the practical churchman's. His St. Brigid might be an aged and experienced Irish mother who has reared a large and splendid family. In a way could there be a better conception of St. Brigid? Yet one cannot mistake the subject. There is the traditional cross and the church. There is the ancient cloak and in the background suggestions of the Celtic ornament. The thick washes of ink boldly state the humanity of the saint and also recall many fine women who have borne their arduous tasks because of her inspiration. His dedication as an artist has enabled Father Hanlon to isolate such an image as this, quite devoid of sentimentality or affectation. The apparent clumsiness of the lines which model the cloak become on closer examination most apt as suggestions of rotundity and weighty volume. They have also a quality of the great stone caves which seem to symbolise the iron will of those Irish Christians who returned to them so often for shelter. This seems to me to be a drawing which combines solace and suffering, but mostly suffering.

Augustine, John of the Cross, Bernard, or Francis de Sales—without bringing in feminism and seeking someone to match Teresa of Spain, Catherine of Siena, Gertrude, or Thérèse of Lisieux. But might we not have had a Berulle, a Lallemant, a De Caussade, someone, that is, of the second rank in the hierarchy of spiritual writers?

General Explanation

One reason of the most general and valid kind is that the Spirit distributes his gifts as he wills. This fact sometimes makes generalisations about Christian history, Christian literature or Christian action hazardous. It also contains an implicit warning against linking divine things too closely with national aspirations and achievements. But it cannot blind us to the fact that some nations are beloved of God as some men are. There is no explanation for God's singular favours to the French save the fact that this is what it means to be God. Why should they have got the most startling private revelations of modern times, Paray le Monial and Lourdes the most conspicuous of them? It is pointless to say they needed them. What then about present-day Latin America and so many other regions that at one time or another would have stood to gain from such favour? God in ancient times chose the Jews; within his Church he chooses also, for he is sovereign and his freedom is infinite. "For the gifts and call of God are without repentance".¹

With such a general proviso there seems nothing against investigation of the particular Irish spiritual inheritance. Such an investigation may be linked with the well-known query: Why have we no Irish saints? It has a further interest for it will show one thing very clearly: contemporary Irish ideas of spirituality denote a marked change from what has been regarded as typically Irish.

Irish Piety Extravert

The early Irish saints seem to have been all extraverts, some of them violently so. The Irish way has sometimes been depicted as one of violent bodily mortification and nothing else. There was a counterpart which must be overlooked. That was the joy that came from a purified, ennobled use of God's creatures. Hence the cluster

of exquisite legends which Helen Waddell and others have revived from the early Irish Church on the theme of nature and on the sacramentalist use of creatures to reach the Creator.

But the tendency was always outwards; the Irish mind became uneasy and uncertain when turned inwards. We might go so far as to say that one or two utterances and episodes of an explosive character found in early Irish hagiography testify to this incapacity for self-knowledge and self-discipline at the profound inner level. Where an Irish saint beset by some irksome and unjustified encroachment on his piety or his way of life tended to protest loudly, his Latin brother merely plunged deeper into the sources of God's grace within himself. I would not press the contrast too closely; it does seem to exist.

A Change : Columba Marmion

Has there been a change in modern times? I contend that there has and that the man who caused it was Dom Columba Marmion.

If Dom Marmion had followed the characteristic Irish way, he would not have written *Christ the Life of the Soul* and the companion volumes. His works would not have been translated into every important language in the Church. Nor would they have aroused enthusiasm in souls directly inclined to the inner mystical way. He broke with the Irish tradition. Rather, he surpassed it. That may be one of the reasons why he is not yet fully appreciated in Ireland. He reflects a profound change in the attitude of his people towards religion.

The change is not yet complete. When it is, the true greatness of Dom Marmion will be realised. It will be seen how necessary it was that Providence should, at the cost of great pain, have torn him up by the roots when he seemed already advancing to maturity and transplant him elsewhere to feed his soul with a richer food. He was set down in the rich soil of Benedictinism and from it drew nourishment without which his faith, however ardent, would have remained dry, perhaps sterile. He may be canonised. If he is there will certainly be a demand to have him proclaimed a Doctor of the Church.

Dom Marmion's eminence depended on a very spiritual interpretation of Christianity, and this was new to the Irish mind. The Faith was preserved by the Irish with heroic tenacity, but when they

came out of their long tunnel of darkness it was evident that through the loss of freedom their expression of the Faith had become restricted and warped.

Perhaps the Faith is not yet in Ireland the full generous thing it should be; there is a residue of Puritanism and occasional pre-occupation with externals. The Irish people being imaginative have often sought saints with easily identifiable physical markings. Under the influence of Dom Marmion and of the school of spirituality which derives from him and from the others of his time who had a Christo-centric outlook, things are changing. Nor must one overlook the earlier and still more influential teaching of the Little Flower. This opened the way to holiness for many people all over the world; I do not doubt that amongst them one may find countless Irish people of our age.

Agents of Change in Ireland

How should one tabulate the signs of change? On what evidence can one rely to establish the fact? What is there to hope for? I shall answer these questions briefly and let the reader agree or differ, as every reader must do in such debatable matters.

Souls seeking perfection in this country at the present time will of necessity partake of the general spirit that characterises the Irish Church, will be influenced by the dominant movements within the body of Irish Catholicism. One of these is the missionary effort to which the whole Irish Church contributes directly or indirectly; another is the Lay Apostolate, which has many forms but one outstanding, the Legion of Mary; this latter enlarges and deepens the third characteristic, which I should call conscious, overt devotion to Our Lady; lastly, there is the most marked feature of the Irish Catholic body at the present time, what makes them unique in the world, constant public worship by the whole community. This is most clearly shown in attendance at Mass in the proportion of daily communicants.

It may be thought that these characteristics are found everywhere where the Faith is active. Not necessarily, just as one can say that there are manifestations of Catholic life found elsewhere that we do not have, as yet. For instance? The most obvious answer is the liturgical movement, taking that phrase in its modern and therefore exactly circumscribed sense. If one takes the Liturgy in its general

sense, the Irish are a deeply liturgical people, because they are an intensely worshipping people. They go to Mass and that is the central act of the Liturgy; they go constantly. But devotees of the liturgical movement would find fault with their mode of participation. I do not say that I agree with this criticism. I have known too many saintly people whose attendance at Mass fulfilled the demand of the Church in the only word she has added to the Consecration as spoken by Christ—*Mysterium Fidei*. Those I have in mind had Faith alright; that is the essential participation.

I shall not enlarge on other things which are distinctive of Catholics elsewhere, but are not noticeable here, the intellectual apostolate, for instance. Let us see how the features I have enumerated might be said to affect the kind of spirituality that is growing in the country. This growth is not, as formerly, under national influences only, but is impelled and strengthened by excellent outside influences, spiritual books translated from the continent, especially from France, contact with fervent Catholics of other countries through pilgrimages and membership of religious or lay associations.

The Missionary Effort

The Missions do not seem to call for intense spirituality. That is a superficial judgment which the history of the Church contradicts. It was in the sixteenth century, the great age of Spanish evangelising efforts in the New World, that the Spanish mystics arose; seventeenth century France and nineteenth century France had the two movements running parallel also. Is not one of the greatest French mystics of the last century, St. Thérèse, also Patroness of the Missions? It was the Irish missionary movement that threw up, amongst others, Fr. Edward Leen, who has been acclaimed throughout the world as a spiritual writer of high quality. The Missions create a sense of the Church and they bring the truths of divine grace to life. This vital recognition is the essence of true mysticism. The reader will notice that I am using this word without apology—it is time that we restored it to its dignified place in Christian language and discarded the bogus and frightening connotations that had clustered around it. I look confidently for a great mystical renaissance in this country; I think I have seen the beginnings of it in the convents in which I have had occasion to preach retreats for over twenty years.

The Lay Apostolate

There will be mystics too amongst the laity for the facility and the discernment with which our good Catholic layfolk have assimilated spiritual doctrine is one of the most consoling things in the present age. Their religion is not sentimental. It is "Faith seeking understanding", *Fides quaerens intellectum*. A highly intelligent French bishop who stayed here some years ago told me that he had been completely misinformed about the intellectual groundwork of Irish Catholic Faith. It was far stronger than he had known.

Devotion to Our Lady

I come to the third aspect of Irish Catholicism at the present time. Our Lady holds the key. I have implied a distinction between overt and implicit devotion to Our Lady. All the saints have had implicit devotion to her, loved her and been loved by her. But some saints and some peoples have needed something more, a conscious, more explicit and more articulate attitude of mind, will and heart. In this we are blood brothers to the Poles. We cannot love God fully and to our satisfaction as well as his without bringing her into it openly. There may be in the national temperament some explanation of this; there is a direct effect of it in the spontaneous character of Irish piety and the occasional disregard of stylised attitudes and conventions which the Latins find disconcerting.

The Irish have entered wholeheartedly into the modern Marian revival. We are still only at the outset of this movement in the Church. It is here that the mystical graces I have mentioned may perhaps be expected. Profound mysticism, as recent theological and biographical studies have made very clear, can be the term of genuine devotion to Our Lady. The sense of union with her, of her presence in life as a creative force, should on this general thesis be the goal of Irish spirituality. I leave to others to analyse more fully the implications and the necessary limitations that must be observed in formulating any such hope. Union with Mary would be probably classified as a divine favour *gratis data* and aspiration towards it should therefore be tempered by recognition of God's sublime freedom. There is a debate in modern spiritual writing on the

question of the universal call to contemplation. The Marian grace of which I speak raises similar problems. Not insoluble problems.

Communal Fidelity in Worship

There is the fourth aspect of contemporary Irish Catholicism, communal fidelity in worship. Throughout the world, as we know, this is at the moment relatively rare amongst Catholics. We have been given for one allegedly Catholic country after another the distressing percentages of practising Catholics, five per cent, fifteen, forty, sixty per cent and so on. Ireland is exceptional. I suppose over ninety per cent of the population attend Mass on Sunday, accomplish their Easter duty and have a sense of the Church as a central thing in their conduct. I know that one can go on to ask further searching questions as to what extent this sense of the Church has a direct influence on all their conduct, professional, commercial, civic, political. But I think that we must start with what is undeniably good and work on it.

There seems, accordingly, to be a call to the Irish at the present time to seek some form of communal spiritual perfection. Is not this at variance with the very nature of spirituality? some will ask. The most obvious answer is in the Church of the Catacombs. We are not in the Catacombs. But the communal sense of divine things which animated them is something that we may, with the very necessary modifications, strive to emulate.

There is another reason for this. Men become perfect by reacting strongly against their natural defects. The most apparent natural defect of the Irish in the course of their history is fratricidal bitterness and strife. I do not think we should exaggerate its nature or its effects, and I think that there are other natural defects that would have done us immeasurably more harm. But it is there.

Why not then, each and all of us, strive to create about us the sense of mutual trust, of positive affection, of profound respect one for the other, and of active co-operation in doing good that would obliterate the memory of such evil forever. It is common to explain the shortcomings of the Irish by referring to the fact that we live on a small island. But there should be an advantage to all of us in this very destiny. It could lead to a more intimate sharing in spiritual goods, to that fellowship—if I may borrow a Protestant word—that characterised the early Christians.

Each age in the Church has something to learn from all the ages that have gone before. Perhaps it will not be too far-fetched to suggest that the Irish should aim at reproducing that astonishing collective fervour that marked the early Christians. Our isolation in the modern world would not then lead us to thoughts of complacency or pride. It would still further strengthen the missionary zeal of our people. We have all met missionaries returning to Ireland with a thirst for the Faith and the fervour that they know exists here, with a yearning for the atmosphere of Christian things that they keep telling us is unique. May this spirit increase and those living in Ireland be always more worthy of it. With it we shall also see the liturgical movement grow and the intellectual apostolate become more effective.

Then we shall not fear the answer to the question: Why have the Irish not more saints? It is true that since St. Laurence O'Toole we have had no canonised saint. But we can look to the future with confidence. Newman's prophetic word is relevant. We are a people that have had "a long night and must have an inevitable day". Or, as St. Malachy said seven hundred years ago as he lay dying in the arms of his friend Bernard of Clairvaux: "A week of centuries shall pass by and then my country shall take her place amongst the nations of the earth and she shall shine in beauty like the rose".

Holy Week on Films

Readers living in Dublin will have an opportunity of seeing *Holy Week* and *Easter Vigil*, the two sound-films which explain so beautifully the ceremonies of Holy Week, at the Matt Talbot Hall, Granby Lane (off Parnell Square), on 26, 27, 28 and 29 March; two showings each night, at 7 o'clock and at 9 o'clock. *Triptych*, the lovely colour-film which shows paintings of Our Lord's life, to the accompaniment of songs by Gigli, will also be shown. Tickets to be booked in advance at 30 Parnall Square, at M. H. Gill and Son, Upper O'Connell St., or at Browne and Nolan's, Nassau St.

THE TRINITY IN ART, A NOTE

WILLIAM BARDEN, O.P.

One hesitates to speak about the Blessed Trinity in words. It is as easy to be inaccurate as it is impossible to be complete. St. Augustine spent twenty years composing his fifteen books on the Trinity, but he himself admitted that what he said was said, not so much to say something as not to be found silent. And the many words that would convey so little, would convey that little only to so few. Here indeed understanding minds do need to be kin to the angels. Not for nothing does Christian art represent the great bishop of Hippo in conversation with the small child on the sea-shore who is trying to put the vast ocean into a small hole in the sand. The popular Christian judgment on the fifteen books on the Trinity is that they represent just such an impossible task. Trinitarian devotion keeps close to the New Testament, and though conceptualising theology always a noble task, in this field it is most conscious of its limitations, most aware of how delicate must be the use of ideas. There precisely where the concept is least satisfying, it must be used with the greatest humility and the most sensitive restraint.

When one turns to the graphic arts the situation is more hazardous, if not hopeless. Indeed the less the artist seeks to represent and the more he leans towards the symbol, the better. St. Patrick's shamrock, seen as a symbol of the Three-in-One and not as a representation, is not completely unsuccessful. Rublev's wonderful fifteenth-century Trinity, the three angels seen by Abraham, although it repeats the human form three times, does so so cunningly and with such contemplative reverence for the mystery that it is the most successful graphic statement that we have. The representational has ceased to be that, and reverently loses itself in the symbol. The graphic artist was a contemplative theologian as well, who knew that the mystery he was trying to state in a lesser way was one that even the higher technique of the pure thinker was unable, except most inadequately, to express. Where thought can hardly do more than provide a suggestion, the function of the graphic artist is hardly to do more than to offer a suggestion of a suggestion. One trusts that Benedict XIV who had much to say on this matter would have allowed Rublev's Trinity to pass. To this day it is commonly found on the *Iconostas* in the churches of our eastern brethren.

Mr. Kelly's picture gives us St. Patrick in his full theological dimension. If St. Patrick's humanness and humility emerge from his *Confessio*, the depth of his faith is uttered for all time in his prayer. The psychological power of the Rune is invigorated by the metaphysical power of the Faith. The supreme mystery of the Trinity as the background and the key to existence, as the light that irradiates the darkness of a fallen world—it is this that Mr. Kelly suggests as the background and the key to the mystery of the person that was Patrick. How true is this insight. Patrick is indeed another Abraham, with Abraham's vision and Abraham's faith, the father of many believers because of the strength of his faith in the Three-in-One.

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS: SAINT AND INTELLECTUAL¹

JÉROME HAMER, O.P.

THE THEOLOGIAN

WE might be tempted to build up the personality of St. Thomas from his writings alone. Without having recourse to his biographers, the chroniclers of those days, we might ask ourselves what sort of man the author of works such as the *Summa Theologica*, the Commentaries on Aristotle, on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, and on the Scriptures, must have been. In this way we would succeed in tracing a picture of Brother Thomas: a man of rare intelligence, an indefatigable worker, a well-equipped intellectual, surrounded by a good library. We would thus see St. Thomas as a sort of incarnation of theology in practice. This picture would not be false, but it would be by no means complete.

We could find out all this from his biographers.² They tell us what a prodigious memory he had. Brother Thomas never forgot anything. His memory became increasingly richer, like a book in which each page adds to the preceding one without blotting anything out. The *Catena Aurea*, executed at the request of Pope Urban IV, was written, at least partly, from memory. St. Thomas recorded there what he remembered from his readings during his travels. When he wrote this work, a commentary on the four gospels complete with patristic texts, St. Thomas had not an adequate library at his disposal.

He had great powers of concentration. He could dictate to three secretaries at the same time, sometimes even to four, and about different subjects. One of his secretaries, a Breton from the diocese of Tréguier, tells that St. Thomas once went on dictating when fatigue had caused him to doze.

Thomas showed early signs of his interest in study, he was always

1. This article has been translated from the French by Father Raymond O'Donovan, O.P.

2. In these reflections, I have tried to trace the portrait of St. Thomas "as seen by the chroniclers of his age. This is no critical work. An English Dominican has published the principal documents in a good English translation, with excellent historical notes: *The Life of St. Thomas Aquinas. Biographical Documents translated and edited with an introduction*, by Kenelm Foster, O.P., London, Longmans Green.

studious. His chronicler, Bernard Gui, says he was so already in Monte Cassino, and in the University of Naples. When, as a young Dominican, he was sent to Cologne to become the pupil of St. Albert the Great, St. Thomas soon showed his intellectual ability. It was the beginning of a life consecrated entirely to university teaching. According to his chronicler, whom we are following here, St. Thomas admitted later that he never read a book without completely understanding it.

He did his best to have all the books he required at his disposal. One day when he was coming back with some of the younger brethren from the basilica of St. Denys in Paris, somebody said to him: "Look, Master, what a beautiful city! Would you not like to be its lord?" St. Thomas replied: "I would prefer rather to have the commentary of St. John Chrysostom on St. Matthew's gospel. If I had to look after the city of Paris, I would not have time to contemplate". This was no lack of interest in the temporal city, it was the expression of a deliberate choice. Thomas was master of the sacred sciences, and wanted to give himself exclusively to this task.

The chroniclers have not forgotten some quaint traits of his temperament. Brother Thomas was absent-minded to an almost unbelievable degree. Brother Reginald, his companion, served him with the devotion of a disciple for his master, a son for his father, and a pious soul for a saint. But he also had to look after him as a mother does her child. Concentrated on the object of his studies, Thomas was often absent from the realities which surrounded him. Someone was needed to look after him, to protect him from accidents, to put his food on his plate in front of him, and Brother Reginald did all this. One day St. Thomas forgot that he was in the presence of the King of France, at his very table, imagining that he was in his cell busy thinking over what he was going to dictate. On another occasion his absent-mindedness made him neglect a papal legate.

THE SAINT

All this is very external. Brother Thomas was above all a saint. The most striking thing in his life's story is his devotion to the Eucharist. He used to celebrate Mass with visible devotion. After his own Mass, without taking off his vestments, he used to assist at a second Mass, celebrated by his companion, which he often served. At one period there were numerous discussions in Paris about the presence of Christ with his bodily dimensions under the species of the sacrament of the Eucharist. The Masters did not

agree and there were many different opinions. Finally they decided to submit the question to Thomas. He prayed first of all and then wrote his theological treatise. He put the manuscript on the altar before Christ, the Master of masters, and then lifting up his hands he prayed: "Lord Jesus, who are really present in this sacrament, You who act in the Eucharist by that divine Wisdom which made the world, if what I have written is true, give me the grace to be able to teach it clearly to my students. If, on the contrary, what I have written is in any way untrue or lacking the integrity of the faith, don't let me say it". Suddenly St. Thomas's companion and others of the brethren who were present saw Christ himself appear on the altar and say: "Thomas, you have written well about the sacrament of my Body. You have answered the question posed to you by the Masters, as well as a man still entrammelled in a body can in human language". The chronicler tells us that St. Thomas explained the difficulty before the University with a clarity that equalled his interior illumination.

It was while he was on his way to the council of Lyons to answer the summons of Gregory X that St. Thomas fell seriously ill, and had himself taken to the Cistercian abbey of Fossa Nova, not far from Rome. When Viaticum was brought to him, he was asked, according to the liturgical custom of the time, for a profession of faith in the real presence. St. Thomas, with deep emotion but in a strong voice then said: "Even if it were possible for us, during our earthly journey to have a fuller understanding of this dogma, than that given by our faith, at this moment it is by this faith alone that I declare: I believe, I am certain that this is really the Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, Son of the eternal Father, born of the Virgin Mary. I believe this sincerely and make profession of it". But St. Thomas was not content with this and added: "I receive you, price of my redemption, and food of my journey. It was for you that I studied, laboured and watched. I have preached about you. My teaching has been about you. I have never consciously uttered a word against you. But if I have ever said anything in any way inaccurate about this Sacrament . . . I leave it to the judgment of the holy Roman Church. I wish to end my life in obedience to her".

This devotion to the Eucharist is built into the framework of a life of prayer. St. Thomas used to get up at night in order to pray. He used to pray before working. He would stop dictating in order to continue praying. More than once Brother Thomas told his companions how much prayer had helped him to penetrate the

divine truth which was the object of his teaching. It was while praying that he received more than once special graces, like that of the apparition of SS. Peter and Paul coming to help him to understand a passage in the prophet Isaias. St. Thomas made a practice of spiritual reading: "To overcome aridity which is often", says his biographer, "the result of abstract and subtle thought", Brother Thomas, from time to time, would read selections from the homilies of the Fathers. This increased his devotion and deepened his intellectual penetration.

St. Thomas was an obedient man. This certainly is the second principal characteristic of his spiritual life. He obeyed his brethren, but above all he put himself at the disposition of the authorities of the Church. Pope Urban IV especially called upon his services. We have seen that he asked him to write the *Catena Aurea*. Pope Urban had asked Brother Bonaventure, the great Franciscan theologian, to write commentaries on two of the gospels. The latter, however, pleaded in excuse his duties as Minister General of his order. The work was then given to Brother Thomas. Now at this time he was in charge of the house of studies in Rome: "By order of the same Pope", writes Bernard Gui, "Brother Thomas also wrote the office of Corpus Christi. . . . Thomas composed the whole of this office, including the lessons, and all the portion to be recited both day and night, the Mass also, and besides all that was to be sung on that day". The Pope asked Thomas for all this when he had reached the period of full maturity, at a time when he was busy with his own great works. These new tasks must of necessity interfere with those St. Thomas had already undertaken. However, service of the Church took precedence over all other.

"He died, as he had lived, obedient". This is the last sentence in Bernard Gui's life of the saint. When St. Thomas left Naples to go to the council, he was already ill, and knew that his end was near. Shortly before this, he had had that extraordinary ecstasy after which he gave up writing. Nevertheless, at the command of the Pope he set out. Now journeys at that time were by no means as pleasant as they are today. When had St. Thomas to leave Naples? We do not know. We know he died in Fossa Nova on the 9th March. He was on his way to a council which was to open, beyond the Alps, in Lyons, on the 7th May. The journey probably hastened his death. But could St. Thomas refuse his help to Gregory X who had called him to a council to unite the Greeks once more to Rome?

THE THEOLOGIAN-SAINT

Sanctity in St. Thomas is not in a separate compartment from theology; rather is it the source of his theology. It is true that supernatural faith is all that is needed for theology. It is all that is needed for intellectual theological knowledge. But if theology is to be truly alive, more is needed. It must be in sympathy with its object, it must become acquainted with it. And God is this object. It is by prayer, contemplation and penance that one comes in contact with him. One must have within oneself the religious motivating power which urges one on to seek him. A supernatural instinct is necessary in order to speak of the mysteries in a fitting manner. Our seeking ends in the mystery of God's life. Sanctity then is far from being superfluous to a theologian. St. Thomas loved truth, intensely and without compromise. His chronicler tells us that his teaching was like the edge of a sharpened knife which cut error at the very root. It is to his sanctity that we owe the balance of his theological studies. St. Thomas's attention is always fixed on one aim: he considers God, God alone, for he sees all else in the light of God, in the illumination of the first truth. If Brother Thomas had not been a saint, he would have allowed himself to be attracted to one side or another by his intellectual curiosity.

As he lived by the mystery of God, St. Thomas respected the mysteries of theology. The dialectician never got the better of the theologian. When at the end of his life, God in an ecstasy gave him the grace of a closer experience of the divine being, Thomas measured up the distance that exists between human speech and the object of our faith, and thereafter ceased to write.

It is to his sanctity that we owe his respect for his opponent. Bernard Gui shows how St. Thomas refused publicly to humiliate the candidate for a degree who talked in a slighting manner about tenets solidly based, which Thomas had adopted, following the example of the Church. St. Thomas would not so lightly swerve from the truth. Quite the opposite. But with delicacy and patience he tried to enlighten his young opponent on the real consequences of the doctrines he was professing. In all his works, St. Thomas respected his adversaries, trying always to understand their point of view. He respected them also by trying to convince them, in refusing to force them. Thomas here gives a lesson to the philosophers of our own times. He never hurt an opponent while exchanging ideas with him. There is never any malice attached to even the most severe judgments he made. He loved truth, and hated error, but he

was never shaken from that serenity which flows from true charity. Respect for an opponent is nothing else than another form of the most scrupulous respect for truth, truth to be accepted by all, truth which a mind different to ours should find at the end of its search, truth which ought to attract all men. St. Thomas never wielded truth like a cudgel.

One cannot separate in St. Thomas the saint, the professor, the religious and the writer. His whole Christian and religious life is unified around one single axis of charity and mercy: the teaching of divine truth whether in philosophy, theology or exegesis. In his works, directly or indirectly, we meet the saint.

PAX ROMANA DAY

Pax Romana is the international organ of Catholic Action for university students, graduates and professional people. On 7th March over two million members throughout the world celebrate "Pax Romana Day" with special Masses, lectures and prayer in honour of St. Thomas Aquinas, patron of Catholic scholarship. For information on Pax Romana in Ireland, write to Mr. Tom O'Connor, Department of Physics, University College, Galway.

Holy Week Folders

In collaboration with the editor of *Rosary Letter*, we have produced a simple four-page illustrated commentary on the ceremonies of Holy Week. The commentary is written by Father Austin Flannery, O.P., and describes the essential themes of Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. The folders may be had from the Editor of DOCTRINE AND LIFE, St. Saviour's, Dublin, and cost 7/6 per hundred, one penny each for smaller quantities.

DIGEST OF PAPAL DOCUMENTS

Our twenty-first digest covers documents published in the OSSERVATORE ROMANO during the month of November, 1960. Everything which is of merely sectional or local interest is omitted, everything else which has a bearing on the spiritual life is summarised or translated. Father Austin Flannery, O.P., is responsible for the summaries and translations. All direct quotations are indented or placed between inverted commas.

WORKING IN HARMONY: ADDRESS TO RELIGIOUS SUPERIORS

On 15 November the Holy Father addressed a meeting of Italian provincials of religious orders. It was the second congress of the Committee of Italian Provincial Superiors of Religious Orders of Men (*Comitato dei Superiori Provinciali degli Istituti di perfezione maschili in Italia*). The Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Religious told the Holy Father, in an address, that the committee had been formed in March 1957, at the instigation of the Congregation for Religious, and following the example of the formation of a similar committee in 1951 of the superiors general of religious orders. Since then they had met periodically, their aim being to get to know one another better and to study certain common problems, such as: the betterment of apostolic schools, the formation of aspirants, the most suitable age for entry into the novitiate, the perseverance of aspirants, etc. The Cardinal added that a great deal had already been achieved, and he instanced: friendliness and mutual agreement; the pooling of experience gained in governing their respective provinces and in the solution of problems of the modern apostolate; the desire for greater co-operation with the secular clergy in the apostolate, under the guidance of the bishops.

Having welcomed the provincials and expressed his appreciation of what they had already achieved, the Holy Father continued:

During the past forty years Our predecessors have issued many directives on the co-ordination of apostolic work. They aimed at the elimination of such useless and dangerous delays as may be caused by lack of harmony, monopolising tendencies or—which God forbid—by an inability to tolerate the work of others, however valuable, in the same apostolic field. In the mind of the Popes, such collaboration would make for greater agreement between the clergy, secular and religious, of each diocese, would make their work more efficient, as they willingly follow the wishes and directives of the Bishop.

We have accepted this heritage as a sacred duty. The Synod celebrated in Venice in November 1957 can be taken as an example

of Our solicitude in the matter. And We are happy to record that Our project—to regard secular priests as absolutely one (*un tutt'uno*), constituting together the diocesan clergy, at the service of souls, under the paternal regard of the Bishop—was received with respect and enthusiasm and is now a happy reality (cfr. *Patr. Eccl. Ven. Synodus XXXI, Const. 12*).

With greater authority behind it, the Synod of Rome has formulated this problem clearly and persuasively. It underlines the equality of the secular and regular clergy in the fulfilment of their priestly duties (par. 169-170). It requests unity of action in all parishes, both those in the hands of secular priests and those in the hands of regulars, so as to guide and edify the faithful of Rome and the pilgrims who visit the city. How touching is the exhortation of the Breviary: "Let us sing hymns sweetly to the Lord, with one voice" (par. 175).

Such harmony makes the resulting co-ordination of effort a reflection of the very light of heavenly beatitude. It is as edifying a development as one could find here below and it is the only foundation for lastingly efficient and fruitful work. On the other hand, one knows from bitter experience that fragmentation of energies is a notable and dangerous obstacle to the very liberty of the sacred ministry and of the apostolate.

It is Our wish that you would be mindful of this need (for harmony) during your meetings. It is something which We desire very much. Happily, it is already a fact and there are grounds for hope that it will increase in the future. The never-failing energies which religious orders and congregations put at the service of souls are a sure guarantee of greater increase of the divine life in the Church. Religious orders and congregations have in their great traditions and noble spiritual heritage a deep fecundity, the source of an impulse towards priestly activity which—exercised under the friendly regard of the bishop and in the measure of co-ordination which he has suggested or proposed and guided—can be a powerful help in the modern ministry and a valuable contribution, at a deep level, towards the winning of society for Jesus Christ.

Dear Sons. The religious orders and congregations can do a great deal, a very great deal, in this urgent apostolic need: first of all, by means of the prayer which ascends to God continually from each house; secondly by the force of example, which gushes forth as from a spring in every order and congregation in which the virtues of its founder live. The Synod of Rome has left us some proud words which are apposite in this context. We give them to you as a guide for you work in the next few days and in the future, both for you and for your brothers: "Religious, by the gravity of their conduct, their way of speaking and acting, should teach all men, the value both of voluntary mortification of self-love and concupiscence, and of a hard life. They should prove themselves to be lacking in world-

liness and to be faithful to the practice and love of poverty and of the other religious virtues”.

Such evidence of detachment, of poverty and of mortification is necessary in a world which, in the rueful words of sacred Scripture, is given to the double concupiscence of the flesh and of the eyes and to the pride of life (cfr. 1 *John* 2:15). Your presence in the world—tranquil and unobtrusive, confident and courageous—can contribute so much towards the triumph of the great ideals for which you entered the Church’s service, willingly and faithfully co-operating with her venerable and zealous pastors (*Oss. Rom.*, 17 November, 1960).

THE CHURCH OUR MOTHER

On 18 November, 1960, the *Osservatore Romano* published the text of a letter sent by the Holy Father to the Cardinal Archbishop of Florence on 31 August for a general mission which was held in the city. In the course of his letter, the Pope said:

“The Church our Mother” will be the theme of your piety and of your study during the coming mission. This is in accord with Our deepest desires. It sets in relief a magnificent truth of the Catholic faith, a truth which can fire the faithful with fruitful convictions.

In our days we are more acutely sensible of the need for fraternal collaboration and mutual understanding. The doctrine of the motherhood of the Church can transfigure this realisation in the light of truth and Christian grace. In the Church, the faithful become part of the Mystical Body of Christ. They are re-born in Baptism, nourished by the Bread of the Eucharist, sustained by the other sacraments and sources of grace. They find in the Church the never-failing fount of life. She makes them “partakers of the divine nature” (2 *Peter* 1:4) and binds them together by the links of intimate and fraternal love and of mutual help.

We cherish the hope that a more profound understanding of this great truth will strengthen in these sons their love and loyalty to the Church, the kind-hearted Mother who, throughout the liturgical cycle and in all the acts of her *magisterium*, has at heart the salvation of her sons.

We hope, lastly, that the mission will help to set in sharp relief the role of the parish, where the true Christian life takes shape and reveals its strength. It is there, in fact, that the Church’s motherhood displays its full efficacy. The faithful there form something akin to a true family, with the altar for its centre, reaching out to spread the truth and the warmth of the Gospel to all branches of society, given to the generous practice of charity, showing good example and living

in an atmosphere of mutual trust of all its members (*Oss. Rom.*, 18 November, 1960).

THE CHURCH AND HUMAN PROBLEMS

On 21 November, 1960, the Holy Father sent a letter to the Bishop of Adria to express his sympathy on the recent flooding of the region. In the course of the letter he said:

How far from the truth are they who . . . think that the Church concentrates so much on spiritual values that she forgets about the human trials that come man's way. No! she is a mother and she understands and helps her children. She values whatever contributes even to the material betterment of their lives. She takes to heart the troubles of the workers and makes her own the worries of families whom unemployment robs of their bread-winners. For that reason she does not cease to urge the authorities, the employers and all others who are in a position to offer advice or to influence events, to provide permanent employment for all. For that is the foundation of family well-being and of the harmony of society.

The Church pays attention to every development, hoping for the establishment of a true and lasting social justice. Mindful that all men have been redeemed by Christ and are sons of the same Father, she lays the unassailable foundations of social justice: she defends the dignity of manual labour, asserting that it is a noble collaboration with the mind which directs the enterprise . . . (*Oss. Rom.*, 27 November, 1960).

PRIESTLY BEHAVIOUR

All the clergy of Rome, secular and regular, had been invited to a special audience of the Holy Father on 24 November, 1960. He spoke about the Synod of Rome and encouraged the priests to study the acts of the Synod carefully and constantly. He also recommended meditation on Psalm 118. The main part of the address, however, was distributed under the following headings in the *Osservatore Romano*: the splendour of the priest's mission, detachment from the world, the First Pope's Letter.

The Splendour of the Priest's Mission. This first reflection, as the Pope called it, was based on Psalm 14—he used the new Latin translation of the Psalter. The psalm opens with the question: "Lord, who shall sojourn in thy tent? who shall dwell on thy holy mountain?" Having quoted this, the Pope went on to quote and comment on verses from the rest of the psalm, which gives the answer to the question posed in the opening line:

First of all, "to walk without stain". A life without stain, therefore; personal conduct worthy of the admiration of the angels of the Lord, capable of edifying the faithful and fit for the regard of the unbelievers the priest is likely to meet. To praise any other qualities, such as talent, *savoir-faire*, external success, is foolish and deceitful. The priest is revealed, primarily, before the altar: in his observance of the liturgical laws and in his reverence for them, in his punctuality and simplicity. He must be devoid of pretence. He should spend himself, and his approach should be that of a man in constant communication with Jesus—in thought, in sentiment, in word. His life should mirror his conscience and be the fruit of perfect agreement with his confessor, securely guided in asceticism and in effective self-discipline.

The altar, the altar, dear sons, is the focus of our eyes and of our hearts. It is the most characteristic image of our life. From the altar the principal priestly occupations radiate: hearing confessions, direction of souls, catechetics, care of the sick, contact—easy, prudent, patient—with the faithful of all conditions and ages, in their doubts, their sorrows, in times of public calamity and of misery.

Commenting on other verses of the psalm, the Holy Father said that people who think evil of everything and of everybody are a hindrance to themselves and to others. Priests should rather try to learn the truth about *themselves*. Above all, they should watch their tongues, saying no evil against their neighbour. At the same time, they are not to be blind to the wickedness of the world and should be on their guard against it. They should not compromise with it for the sake of worldly gain.

Detachment from the World. The Pope said that the Synod inculcates detachment from the world and he recalled St. Jerome's commentary on the passage of St. Matthew's Gospel in which St. Peter says to Our Lord: "Behold, we have left all things and have followed thee, what, therefore, shall we have?" (19:27). St. Jerome had remarked that at first sight it looked like over-confidence on St. Peter's part to expect to be rewarded merely for having left his fisherman's boat and nets. But, St. Jerome adds, St. Peter reveals his awareness of a greater claim for reward, when he "adds what is perfect: 'and have followed thee'." The Pope went on:

Let us take a look at these two phrases: *to leave all things*, and *to follow Christ*. They presuppose that the road remains open between the boat and oars, on the one hand, and Christ Jesus, whom we must serve and carry in our hearts, on the other hand. It is impossible to go through life, to exercise the priestly ministry, to serve in the Church's administration, without coming into contact with the world and the spirit of the world. Contact with this spirit will not of itself suffice to make one appreciate the other pole, that is the service of the Lord in the priestly role *par excellence*, the preaching of the

Gospel, the imparting of sacramental grace, the exercise of charity in its various forms. Rather is such contact capable of becoming, and it does in fact become, a daily temptation to superficiality and lack of zeal in carrying out one's priestly duties. To desire and search for riches, distinction, honours, one's personal advancement, accords badly with the *following of Christ* and is in flagrant contradiction to the claim to have "left all things", which is the starting-point from which one reaches the grandeur and the true glory of Christianity, of the Church and of the priesthood in all ages.

The Pope went on to speak of the damage caused by the spread of error and of evil by the press and the cinema. He paid tribute to Catholic efforts to counteract this, but added: "how poor are our efforts compared to the immense muddy flood emanating from the printing-presses, the radio, television and cinema studios throughout the world. Instead of elevating men's minds to the knowledge and love of God . . . they succeed only in corrupting and poisoning sound sentiments, in sowing the germs of dissolution and ruin". He said that, for the priest, "to leave all things" should imply also abstention from reading newspapers, magazines or novels which "contradict in any way the spirit of Christ, the teaching of the Church, the prescriptions or suggestions of the acts of the Synod". He said that all priests should examine their consciences on this matter, "which We judge to be very grave and important".

The Pope went on to speak of St. Augustine's commentary on *St. Matthew*, 11:28-30: "Come to me, all you that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take up my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart; and you shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is sweet, and my burden light". He said that this text is especially applicable to priests, who know fatigue and sadness: "To them too a great reward is promised. It is Jesus, the first priest, who assures them of it: 'I will refresh you'." Our Lord invites priests to take on his yoke, and that he will teach them meekness and humbleness of heart; and this "as a guarantee of peace for their souls". St. Augustine points out, commenting on the text, that "if the flesh is given less scope, the scope of charity is increased".

The First Pope's Letter. Pope John said that while ignorance of the Scriptures "is unpardonable nowadays in any self-respecting Catholic", the clergy of Rome ought to make the two epistles of St. Peter their special study and should become very familiar with them. He quoted some examples of the doctrine taught there.

The Pope recommended the acts of the Synod to the clergy of Rome, remarking that their observance would be primarily a matter for their own consciences. He said that he was confident that the forthcoming ecumenical council would be a success and he asked God to inspire them with the same confidence. He mentioned in passing that for some months he had been giving time to the study of previous councils, and especially to the first Vatican council (*Oss. Rom.*, 25 November, 1960).

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

DEAR FATHER,

I find your review-section excellent. I would like, however, to comment on a review published in your February issue and written by Father P. C. Barry, S.J. It is a review of *The Mystery of the Church*, by Father Yves Congar, O.P. The review itself is admirable, but it leaves unsaid some things which I think should be said.

There is, firstly, Father Congar's reference (quoted by your reviewer) to "the unilateral and often-ossified post-Tridentine theology" (of the Church). I think this description unfair. "Post-Tridentine" theologians included St. Robert Bellarmine and St. Peter Canicius, both of the Society of Jesus and both doctors of the Church. Their works prove that they were not ignorant of St. Paul's teaching on the Mystical Body. The same is true of most of their successors, the *apologetes* of the Catholic Church. (The word in italics is more correct than the word "apologists", favoured by Father Congar.) One could quote at length from Lacordaire, Montalembert, Ozanam and other fellow-countrymen of Father Congar to prove this (see *The Irish Rosary*, March-April 1961). More recent Catholic writers have followed the tradition when possible: R. H. Benson, H. Belloc, G. K. Chesterton, Ronald Knox, A. Lunn, V. Johnson and many others. All these defenders of the faith were faced with actual problems of their own times and environment. Apologetics is no mere abstract science, it is also an art, the craft of bringing souls to God, to Christ and to his Church. It must adapt its methods and its arguments to the current thought of the day.

Secondly, I admit that apologetics is a branch of theology. Many theologians deny this. I accept without reservation St. Thomas's teaching in a text quoted by your reviewer and much emphasised by Father Congar: "The Church in its outward unity . . . as a society . . . as an organisation under a hierarchical authority, is not a different reality from the living Body of new life in Christ whose soul is the living Spirit, the Holy Ghost". St. Thomas distinguishes *two* aspects of the Church, its *outward* aspect as a society or organisation, and its *inward* life, as the Mystical Body of Christ, whose soul is the Holy Spirit. In other words, the Church can be studied in a *purely* theological way, or it can be studied in its externals, and only incidentally as the Mystical Body of Christ. This latter way is the business of apologetics. The two view-points are not exclusive, but complementary. The Catholic apologete in the post-Tridentine period had to stress the *outward* aspect. The same holds good for defenders of the Church today, except perhaps in countries where the Catholic Faith is overwhelming and unchallenged. Where shall we find such countries today? And is it not very difficult to make people understand the doctrine of the Mystical Body? Nevertheless, the authentic Catholic apologete never forgets that the Church is a deep mystery, the living Mystical Body of Jesus Christ Our Lord, its soul the Holy Spirit.

Yours sincerely,

St. Saviour's, Dublin.

RAYMOND O'DONOHUE, O.P.

BOOK REVIEWS

ST. PATRICK IN BOOKS

Over the centuries, and especially since the beginning of the present one, a vast literature has arisen around the figure of St. Patrick. But there are very few books and articles which are both based on sound scholarship and present their subject in a non-technical form, in a language which the seriously interested yet uninitiated reader is likely to enjoy. In the following lines I endeavour to provide such readers with a guide.

Those who remember some Latin from their schooldays will be amply rewarded if they make an effort to read the Confession, the Epistle (Letter to the soldiers of Coroticus) and the Canons of St. Patrick in the original. My own edition (Dublin, Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1952), *Libri Epistolarum s. Patricii episcopi*, 2 vols., is an *editio maxima*, with a very full (in the opinion of some critics excessive) apparatus of MSS. variants and biblical parallels, and a philological commentary. Much cheaper is the minor edition by Newport J. D. White, SPCK Texts for Students 4, London, 1918. To these texts I should like to add the Hymn on St. Patrick by St. Secundinus (*Audite omnes* . . .), of which there are several editions (e.g. in Bernard and Atkinson's *Irish Liber Hymnorum*, London, 1898, and my own in the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, 55 C 6, 1953, pp. 117-127); as a first approach I recommend G. F. Hamilton, *In St. Patrick's Praise*, Dublin, 1920 (Bernard-Atkinson's text with an introduction, an English prose and verse translation, and copious notes). Translations of all these texts are found in my book *The Works of St. Patrick. St. Secundinus, Hymn on St. Patrick* (*Ancient Christian Writers*, vol. 17, Westminster Md., London, 1953); this volume contains also a translation of St. Patrick's Breastplate (Lorica), an introduction and notes, and a bibliography which includes references to articles in periodicals.

The ancient Lives of St. Patrick (Muirchú, *Tírechán*, Bethu Phátraic or the Tripartite Life, and those Latin Lives which were first edited by Fr. John Colgan in his *Trias Thaumaturga*, Louvain, 1647) are not so easily accessible. W. Stokes, *The Tripartite Life of Patrick*, Rolls Series, 1887, 2 vols., is still valuable because of its introduction and the English translation of the Early Middle Irish text. For Muirchú, *Tírechán* and other texts in the Book of Armagh, we have, of course, Dr. John Gwynn's diplomatic edition of this MS. (Dublin, 1913), with its learned yet not too technical introduction. There is no satisfactory critical edition or English translation of the Latin Lives of St. Patrick; but their historical value is rather small.

The ideas about St. Patrick and his times with which we all have grown up are based on J. B. Bury's book, *The Life of St. Patrick and his Place in History*, London, 1905. The main part of the book should not be found too difficult for the generally educated reader; the appendixes are strictly for the expert. In the same year, 1905, Archbishop Healy published his *Life and Writings of St. Patrick*—the last and most impressive work in a long line of traditional, pre-critical learning; it is a good substitute for

the missing translations of the Lives. Bury's work is also the basis of an excellent monograph, the only one on St. Patrick that really answers the description of a good popular book: Eóin MacNeill, *St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland*, London, 1934; a reprint is being prepared by Messrs. Clonmore and Reynolds.

Readers with rather more than average scholarly ambition might tackle T. F. O'Rahilly's *The Two Patricks* (Dublin, Institute for Advanced Studies, 1942); even they, I am afraid, will find James Carney's *Patrick and the Kings* (*Studies in Irish Literature and History*, Dublin, 1955, pp. 324 ff.) a little too technical. The present "Patrician question" turns more and more on technicalities; the little book, *Saint Patrick* (1958), in Radio Eireann's Thomas Davis Lectures series, edited by Rev. John Ryan, S.J., is a good illustration of the variety of views that are presently held. In my *Life and Legend of St. Patrick* (1949) I have taken a deliberately conservative, perhaps an over-conservative stand. In this book I have given also some account of the MSS. tradition of the Writing and Lives of St. Patrick. Those who like their subject "written up" will find Paul Gallico's *The Steadfast Man* palatable.

No student of St. Patrick can neglect the fundamental work of J. F. Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland*, vol. I (New York, 1929); pp. 165-170 and 319-356 are devoted to St. Patrick.

I have refrained from giving references to articles in periodicals; however, I must mention two (which are easily accessible) because they are models of their kinds: M. Tierney, *The European Background of St. Patrick's Mission*, in *Studies* 21 (1932), pp. 199-212, and Rev. D. S. Nerney, S.J., *A Study of St. Patrick's Sources*, published in four instalments in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 5 series, vols. 71 and 72.

LUDWIG BIELER

University College, Dublin

SACRED SCRIPTURE

The Church the Body of Christ, According to St. Paul. By Conleth Kearns, O.P. Dominican Publications, Dublin. Pp. 56. 2/-.

THE doctrine of the union of Christ with the faithful recurs constantly in the New Testament—in the Synoptics (the theology of the Kingdom), St. Peter (the people of God), St. John (eternal life, the Shepherd and the Sheep, the allegory of the vine). St. Paul, however, is the only one who expresses it in terms of head, body and members, and he uses the metaphor to symbolise the living solidarity, not merely of the Lord with believers, but also of the believers with each other in Christ.

As soon as one attempts to gain an accurate understanding of how St. Paul's conception originated and evolved and, above all, of its precise meaning, one is faced with great exegetical difficulties about which the commentators are by no means of one mind. Students of Scripture and general readers could not have a better guide in this difficult study than Father Kearns, whose exact analyses and lucid judgment afford the

desired light and certainty. He deserves our gratitude for having given us in one volume the four articles which he published in *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record* (1958, pp. 1-11, 145-157; 1959, pp. 1-15, 313-327).

Käsemann, Schlier and Wikenhauser (with reservations) would hold that Paul had adapted the Gnostic myth of the Anthropos-Saviour to his own purpose. But this myth is later than the Apostle, and was never anything more than an artificial reconstruction made by the moderns from fragments derived from very disparate literary sources. The truth of the matter is that from the time of his conversion on the road to Damascus St. Paul had perceived—at least in germ—the organic solidarity of Christ with his followers. At Jerusalem he had been taught about the union forged between them by faith, grace, Baptism and the Eucharist. He was fully familiar with the saying: “Whatever is done to Christ’s brothers, be it good or evil, is done to Christ himself” (*Matt.*, 25:40-45).

To help him develop the many aspects of this doctrine, the Apostle borrowed from contemporary literature the metaphor of the “social body” in the sense current in the work of Menennius Agrippa (*Hist.*, II, 32). It is a metaphor for a society analogous to a human organism, in which unity is allied to diversity. The union between Christians, however, is of a much more profound and real nature than is the link binding the members of a political body. These are united, under the authority responsible for the common good, by a moral link, for the attainment of a common purpose. Christians attain this measure of unity, but they add to it. Not only do they obey Our Lord, they share his very life and it is precisely the common possession of this divine life which effects their union with one another and with Christ. Father Kearns rightly underlines the realism of this vivifying communion, which alone permits one to conceive how the assembly of Christians constitute the body of Christ (1 *Cor.*, 12:27), animated by the Holy Spirit.

One regrets that the author speaks of the “mystical body”, an expression which is legitimate in theology but was unknown to the Apostle and which has no exact significance. (Does it mean hidden? secret?) It is useful for distinguishing the social organism which is the Church from the physical body of the Saviour, but Father Kearns shows with considerable discernment that in the Epistles of the captivity it is the physical Christ who is the head, the principle of authority and the source of life for the “body of believers”, who thus become his own body. The most recent exegetes (Cerfaux, Goossens, Benoît) tend to identify the Church-body with the personal body of Christ. While admitting the interest of this interpretation, Father Kearns prefers to make a distinction, following Fathers Prat and Allo, between the two. The truth is that a metaphor ought never to be erected into reality; one must distinguish the metaphor from the concept and the concept from the reality itself, especially when the latter is transcendent. These difficulties show the interest of this book, easily readable and dealing with one of the most important themes of the Christian life.

CESLAUS SPICQ, O.P.

Fribourg University, Switzerland

THE SACRAMENTS

Living the Mass. By F. Desplanques, S.J. Translated by Sister Maria Constance. Sands and Co., London. 1959. 12/6.

RETREAT masters are fond of reminding us that "it is the Mass that matters", and even the most elementary experience of Catholic spiritual life will bear out the truth of the statement. As the re-presentation of Calvary, the Mass is the central act of religion, the greatest offering we can make to God. But it should not be an act of worship set apart, a rite separate and distinct from the rest of our lives. A thoughtful examination of the prayers and actions of this wonderful drama reveals that the Holy Sacrifice is meant to be a guide for our daily living. It should be so integrated into our existence that the Mass becomes our life and our life becomes a Mass. Father Desplanques's book was written to help people realise that ideal, and even a quick glance at the opening pages will tempt one to read and read until the whole book is devoured, and then to read it again. It is that kind of book. There is a Foreword by the Cistercian, Father Raymond, which is so explosively enthusiastic that one feels no book could possibly live up to such an introduction. But this one does, and more. It is not a book to be read or meditated, but one to be prayed—with wonder, gratitude and love. We are made to feel that the Mass is not something going on at the altar, something at which we assist. It is *our* Mass, whoever we may be—labourer or executive, important businessman or little cabin boy, and every particle of our lives is taken up and incorporated into it in the one sacrifice of adoration and love. We come to understand something of the infinity of the drama when we see the Mass reaching out into time and space to bring all things—from the greatest historical event to the most trivial fact of experience—to the feet of God in Christ. Father Desplanques does not give us a commentary on the Mass, but introduces us to the very centre of the sacrifice—to Christ himself. He puts his finger on the key to most of our spiritual problems when he says that "we have mediocre Christians because their Mass is mediocre". If all Catholics—priests and laity—had his approach to the Holy Sacrifice, how they would change the world!

SEÁN FAGAN, S.M.

Mount St. Mary's, Milltown, Dublin

What is a Priest? By Joseph Lécuyer, C.S.Sp., translated by Lancelot C. Sheppard. *Faith and Fact* Series. Burns and Oates, London. Pp. 125. 7/6.

A MORE accurate title for this little volume of the *Faith and Fact* Series would be "The Sacrament of Holy Order". Belonging to the "Life of Faith" section of the series, it takes for granted the more fundamental facts of sacrifice and priesthood in general and takes up the subject at the point where Christ instituted the Christian sacrifice and with it the Christian priesthood at the Last Supper. The sacrificial power of the

Christian priest is further completed by the closely allied commission to forgive sin and to be the official witness to the world of the teaching of Christ. The Christian priesthood is of course essentially a participated priesthood, a sharing in Christ's own priestly power.

Having pointed out these basic facts from the evidence of Scripture, the author proceeds in a number of brief but masterly chapters—scholarly without ever becoming heavy—to trace the subsequent history of the sacrament of Order in the Church. These chapters deal with the bishops, successors of the Apostles, the priesthood, and the diaconate. They describe the graces conferred by each of these orders and examine the functions of each in the life of the Church. Controversial questions are not shirked but are not allowed to monopolise the discussion. A further chapter deals with the subdiaconate, minor orders and tonsure. The question of the celibacy of the clergy is then examined in the light of scripture and history. It would appear that this aspect of the Church's discipline, so violently attacked by the Reformers, has happily come to be better understood and appreciated by present-day Protestantism.

A final chapter discusses the meaning of the "priesthood" of the laity, its relation to the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, and the essential difference between the idea of priesthood as applied to the layman and the sacramental priesthood of the hierarchy. The book compresses a great deal of knowledge into the short space of one hundred and twenty-five pages, and can be highly recommended both to the priest and the lay reader.

JOSEPH CUNNANE

Balla, Co. Mayo

SHORTER NOTICES

A new series of small, paper-backed books of Dominican Spirituality has been launched from Santa Sabina, Aventino, Rome, under the title *Bibliotheca Dominicana*. It is to be a small series, in Latin, confined to what is described as "florilegia . . . ad vitam Ordinis pertinentia". The first production is a selection of texts from Blessed Humbertus de Romanie on prayer: *De Oratione*, juxta B. Humbertum de Romanis, O.P., curavit Fr. Hyacinthus M. Hering, O.P. It has 163 pages, but no price is given.

From Casa Beato Nuno, Fatima comes *The Tertiary in the Modern World*, by Irenaeus Rosier, O.Carm., and Enrique Esteve, O.Carm. (distributed by Carmelite Publications, 60 Aungier St., Dublin, 131 pages, 6/6). Father Eltin Griffin, O.Carm., writes of it: "This important book, written by an outstanding authority on post-war religious mentality and by a professor of theology, should be essential reading for all interested in the lay apostolate. It is a realistic study of the problems facing modern Christianity and of the place of the layman in a world ever more characterised by secularism. Both authors reach the conclusion that the Third Order of Carmel is an adequate means towards helping the modern layman to live the fullness of Christianity".

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